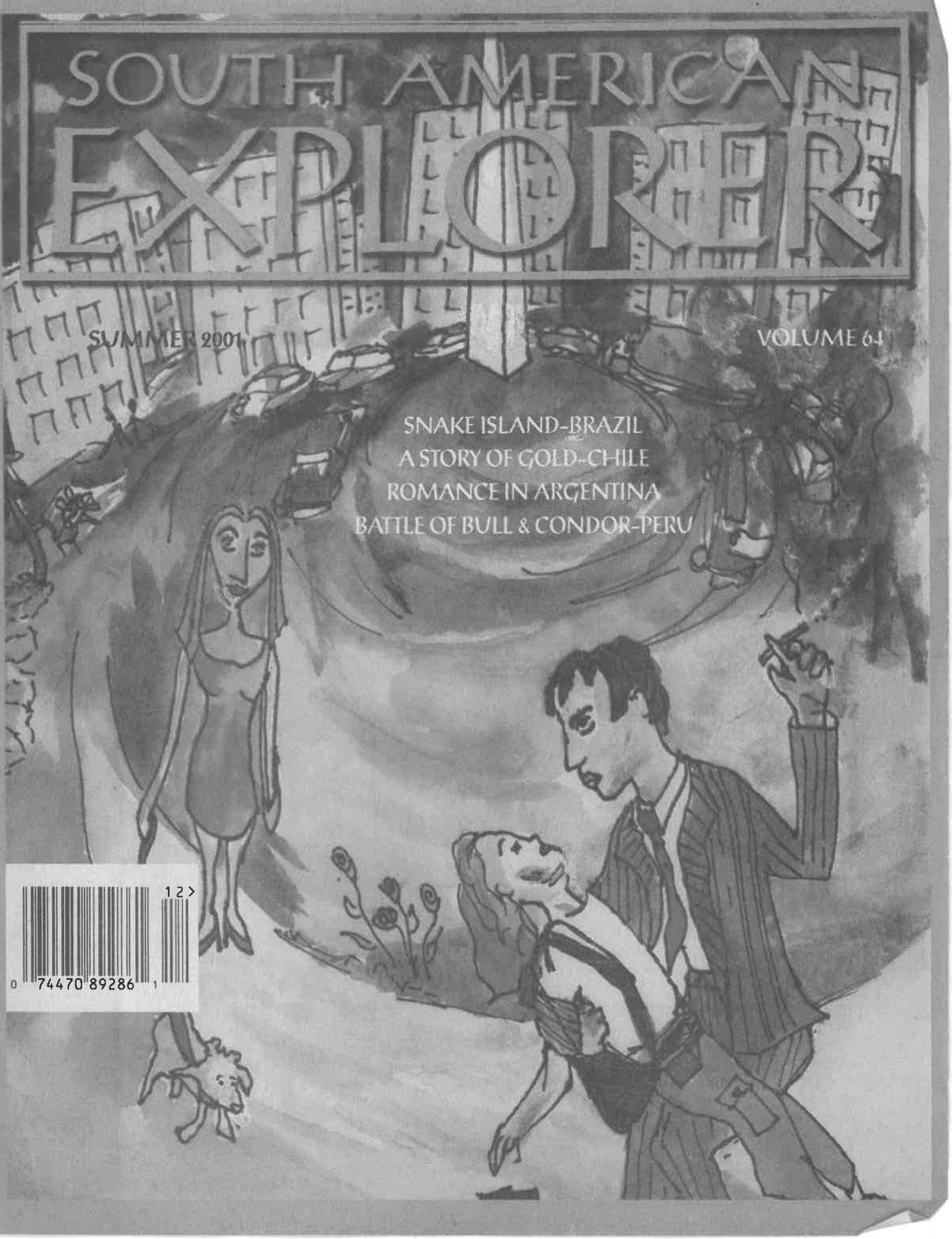
SOUTH AMERICAN EXPLORER

SUMMER 2001 VOLUME 64

SNAKE ISLAND-BRAZIL
A STORY OF GOLD-CHILE
ROMANCE IN ARGENTINA
BATTLE OF BULL & CONDOR-PERU



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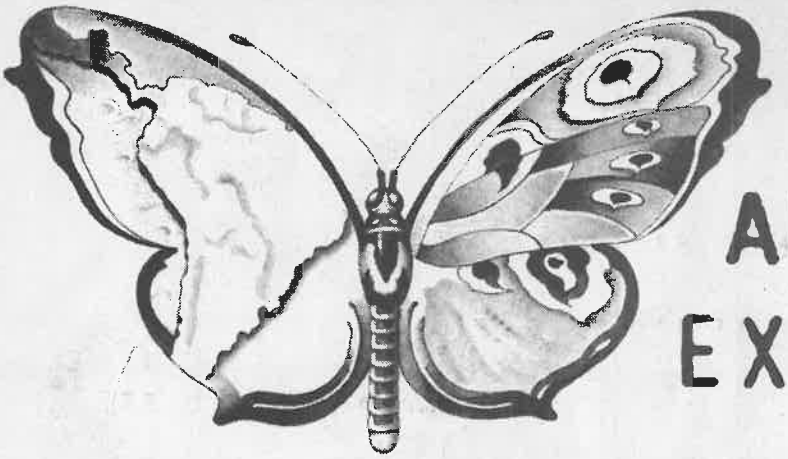

SOUTH AMERICAN EXPLORERS

South American Explorers

SAE is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. With clubhouses in Cusco and Lima, Peru and Quito, Ecuador, and U.S. headquarters in Ithaca, New York, SAE collects and makes available to its members up-to-date, reliable information about Central and South America.

Membership is US $50 ($75 couple) per year. Residents outside the U.S. add US $10 (US $7 for Canada) for postage. Those wishing to sign up in the United Kingdom can join through Bradt Publications (Please allow 4-6 weeks to receive membership cards), 41 Nortoft Road, Chalfont St. Peter, Bucks SL9 OLA, U.K.

Aims and Purposes:

SAE is dedicated to:

- Furthering the exchange of information among travelers and researchers.
- Promoting responsible travel through publication of pamphlets, information packets, the Internet, and its magazine, the South American Explorer.
- Publicizing projects aimed at improving social and environmental conditions in Latin America and collecting funds for their activities.
- Awakening greater interest and appreciation for the welfare of endangered peoples, wildlife protection, and wilderness conservation.
- Collecting information on volunteer and research opportunities.
- Fostering ties between non-profit organizations, NGO's, conservation groups, and other socially and environmentally active organizations.

South American Explorer:

A 64-page quarterly magazine with articles on adventure travel, scientific discovery, history, archaeology, mountaineering, native peoples, languages, anthropology, geology, and more.

Membership Services include:

Knowledgeable Staff: Our friendly staff and volunteers provide advice and practical information to members.

Networking: We assist members seeking travel companions for a trip/ expedition, or seeking to contact experts in a particular field.

Trip Reports: Trip Reports provide specialized information on just about everything---climbing Aconcagua, volunteering, learning Spanish, lining up a local tour operator, white-water rafting, hiking the Darien Gap, visiting the Galapagos, etc.

Maps: The Club maintains a collection of topographical, geological and road maps for member use and purchase.

Lending Library: There is an extensive library of both English and Spanish books at Clubhouses in Quito, Lima, and Cusco.

Merchandise for sale: Books, maps, tapes, T-shirts and other items are on sale at Clubhouses or through the Club's catalog.

Trip planning: Members can call upon the SAE for help and trip planning information.

Discounts: Members receive discounts from many local tour operators, hotels and language schools.

Additional Member Services at Quito, Lima, and Cusco Clubhouses:

Equipment Storage, Mail, Phone and Fax Service, Book Exchange Library, Message Board, E-mail Service.

South American Explorers Catalog:

The annual catalog contains books, maps, and language tapes. Please call or write the Ithaca office to request a copy of the latest catalog. Include $5.00 if the catalog is to be mailed outside the U.S.

To join the SAE:

Contact us at our U.S. headquarters, use the order form on page 63, or sign up at one of the clubhouses.

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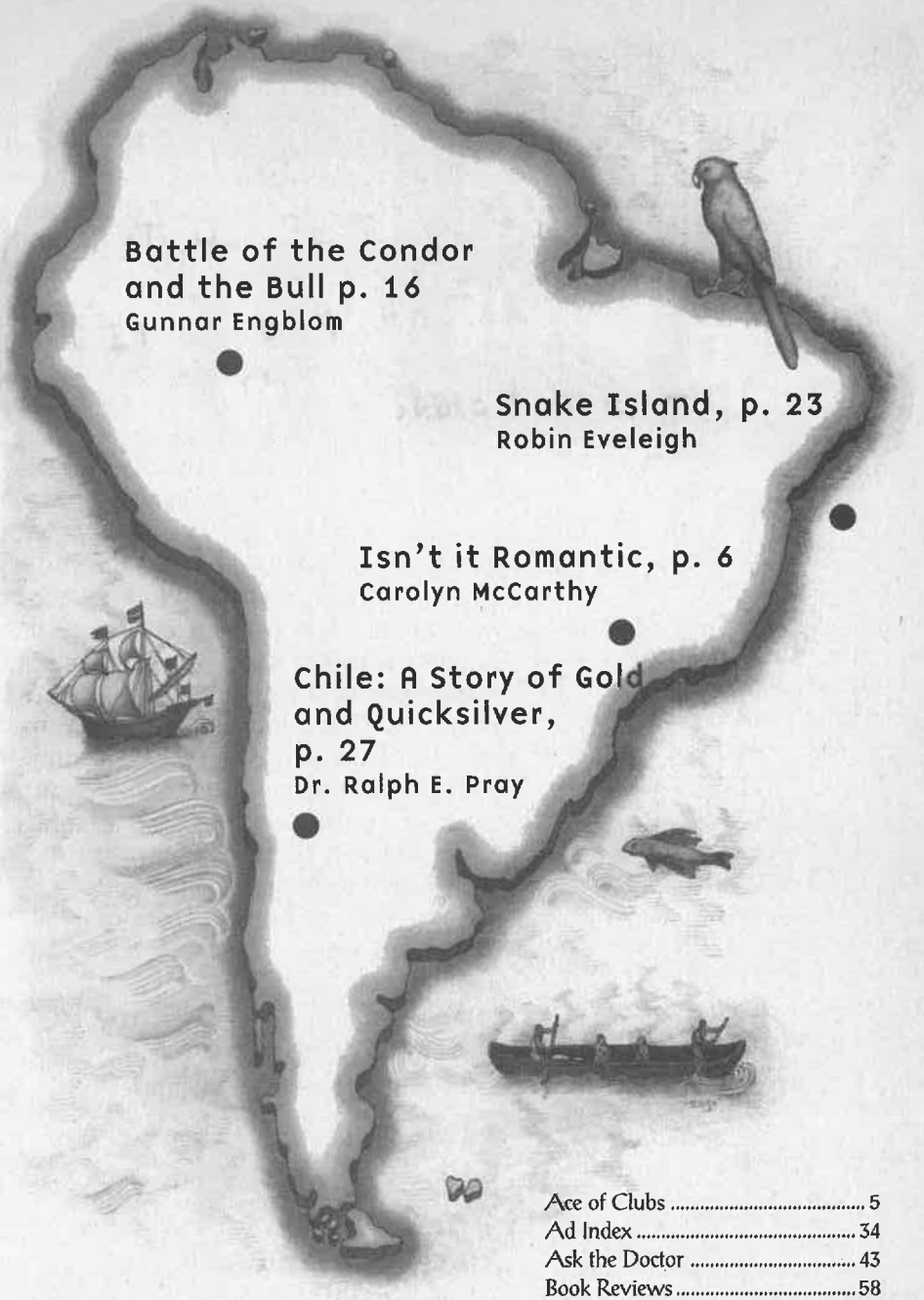

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Dear SAE,

I guess I knew it had to happen sooner or later and it's not a case of *mas vale tarde que nunca*. It appears the South American Explorers has become bureaucratized and ruled by computers. My little *cuy corazon* is crushed.

In the middle of January I faxed a renewal for my SAE Contributing Membership and a renewal for my membership in the Illustrious Order Of The Cuy. In return I received a "form" letter congratulating me on my initiation into the munificent order. I have already been initiated. Moreover, this is my "second" renewal of cuydom. I renewed last year before I went to Peru. In fact, I was the first person to ever renew my most sacred membership. For that Boz, then of the Cusco Clubhouse, granted me a secret Cuy name he obtained from a Cuy shaman!. No, I can't and won't tell you what it is because then it wouldn't be secret anymore, and besides, Boz told me dire and dastardly things would happen to me if I told anybody outside our most illustrious and most excellent Order what it is. I don't know who might read. And for that matter, since I've never met you and shared the secret handshake, I don't even know if you are one of us!

To add psychic injury to insult, my renewal was extended only to 2/28/2002 not 8/2/2002. I felt like I had been ripped five months prematurely from cuydom's warm and compassionate womb. It is only now that I have been able to compose myself enough to unclench my paw from around a bottle of Cusco's finest (sometimes too much to drink is not enough) and write you this letter and return my membership card for correction.

Un cuy no se raja y no se rinde!

Hasta la victoria siempre,

John R. McCain

Dear South American Explorers,

On my recent visit to Taquile Island at Lake Titicaca I have been asked by the authorities of Taquile to circulate their following information about visits to Taquile (see below). For further information you may contact:

Sr. Gabriel Huatta Huatta
Presidente de la Asociacion Artesanal de la Comunidad de Taquile, Apt. 312. Puno, PERU

I would also like to urge you to advise individual tourists to support the Islanders of Taquile as they are at the moment in danger of being swallowed up by the Puno tourist businesses. Unfortunately, individual travelers don't seem to realize how easy it is to go to Taquile in a non-organized way, as they are constantly told by guides and tour operators from Puno that it is very difficult, if not impossible, to go there, if not in an organized group. When you go with an organized tour the Taquileños don't get a share in the profits. Please encourage people to buy their boat tickets directly from the Taquileños and to support the all the communally owned establishments.

Oda Seedhouse
odaseedhouse@hotmail.com

See Tips and Notes for more information on visiting Taquile.

Errata: Issue #63
The truncation of the following excerpt from *Bolivian Baptism* rendered a passage senseless. Please excuse any confusion that might have been cast upon the reader.

I was pooped. My plan to stay on and do a five day jeep tour of the salt flats was quickly fading in appeal. What made me want to follow ant-like those dusty gringos in their zip-off cargo pants anyway? I cringed to see them in restaurants, holding their travel bibles and ordering the same godforsaken greasy salteñas as I had on my plate because The Book described them as savory."

anagram (an-a-gram). *Noun. A word or phrase formed by reordering the letters of another word or phrase, e.g. "Santa" to "Satan." [New Latin anagramma, from Greek anagrammatismos, from anagrammatizein, to rearrange letters in a word : ana-, from bottom to top; see ANA- + gramma, grammat-, letter.] (Source: American Heritage Dictionary, 3rd edition)*

And, when we recently found out that Louis XIII, the King of France during the early seventeenth century, had the regal wisdom to employ a Royal Anagrammist for £1,200 a year, well that did it. We realized South American Explorers had to have one too.

Yes, members you may once have had cause to carp and whine about membership services —but, no more. We've got what you need. At considerable expense, we've hired a certified, proven, honest-to-goodness anagrammist. He is sitting in his office right now waiting to help you. You think we're kidding? Check the masthead.

It took just one Help Wanted ad in the *Ithaca Journal*. Suddenly résumés poured in. (Anagrammists aren't much in demand these days.) After exhaustive examination, we unanimously agreed to bestow the title of SAE Club Anagrammist on Liam Basset. True we were led to this choice in part because his name happily rearranges into "a team bliss", but what really won us over was his knack for coming up with eerily psychic anagrams. During his interview (which took up the better part of three weeks and explains why this issue is a little late), we sat in a circle with Liam in the middle and took turns barking out orders for him to anagrammize.

"Mother-in-law!" Vicky challenged.

Unfazed, Liam snapped back. "Woman Hitler."

"Eleven plus two!" Zach taunted.

"Twelve plus one," Liam retorted.

"George W. Bush!"

"He grew bogus."

Simply Dazzling!

Still for such a weighty decision we had to be absolutely sure. After all, Liam might have come to the interview with prepared anagrams. So, the SAE Founder fired off a final volley challenging Liam to come up with anagrams for himself and his family.

Don Montague: NO EGO-MAD NUT

(Obviously confirms what the founder already knew.)

Zachary Montague: UGH: A CRAZY NO-MEAT

(Incredible, how could Liam know the Zach was a vegetarian?)

Marianne Montague: MONA: A TRUE GAIN, MEN

(An almost magical testimonial to Marianne's dearly departed dog, Mona.)

"Tour de Force!" said Jessica, an observation Liam instantaneously anagrammitized. OR OUR DEFECT," he responded wryly.

Members, what does this all mean for you?

Simply this. We are instituting a higher and all together more rewarding level of membership service. Stop sending us questions about your upcoming trip South. You can find everything you need in a guidebook. From now on simply send us the names of places you'll be visiting, and Liam will deal with the matter anagrammitically. The fact is any two-bit little Club can tell you about the Inca Trail or where to stay in the Galapagos. Only the SAE is in a position to respond to you with a personalized oracular anagram, telling you when to travel, what to see or if you should travel at all. How's that for service?

We have asked Liam to anammagrize these possible destinations for you:

Lima, Peru: I'M REAL UP

(You'll have a great trip but will suffer bouts of sleeplessness.)

Cusco, Peru: COUP CURSE

(Beware the Sendero.)

Galapagos: GALA SPA: GO

(There will be a masseuse on your yacht.)

Aconcagua: GO RUN A COCA RACE

(Use the traditional method of staving off mountain sickness and summit before all your friends.)

Lake Titicaca: A CAT-LIKE ACT I

(Make this your first destination, and you'll find your clothing clawed to bits.)

Quito Ecuador: AUDIO CROQUET

(Clueless about this one? Obviously it contains a personal message for you, which we'd be happy to interpret for a small fee.)

We've already started using Liam's talent's in other areas. Check out these catchy ads to recruit members:

Cusco Clubhouse: SO, USE CLUB COUCH

Quito Clubhouse: SLOUCH BOUTIQUE

Lima Clubhouse: A MUSCLE-OIL HUB

Anagrams may even revolutionize our not always successful club fundraising efforts:

New Order of the Cuy: OUCH! FRY WEE RODENT!

(Hmm. Maybe not.)

Members right now we're seriously thinking of anagrammitizing the whole South American Explorer and giving a prize to whoever can figure out what we're talking about. Before we do, however, and while you can still understand us, we'd like to thank all those special Contributing, Supporting, Life and After-Life members who've kept us afloat all these years.

Thank you one and all.

Pamela Tan

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Julie Cabacungan
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Isn't It Romantic?

Carolyn McCarthy

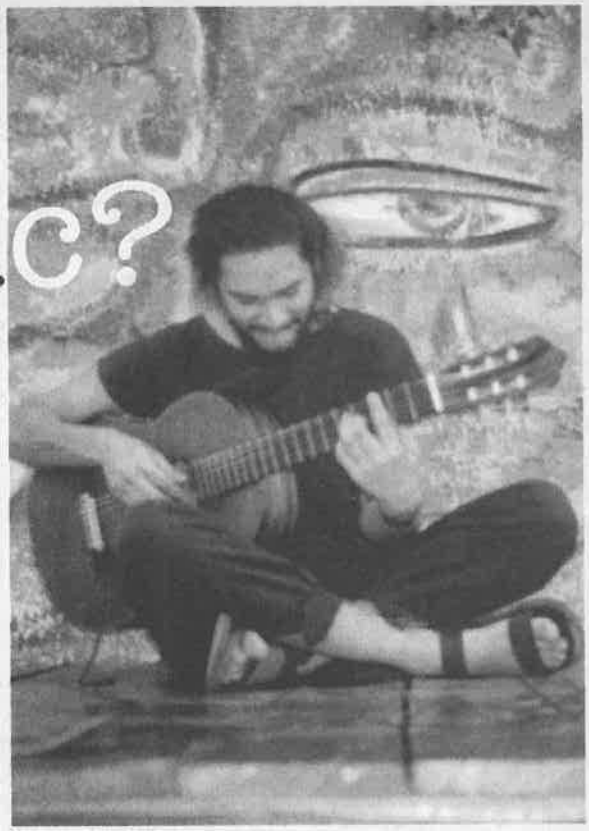

Photo by Anne Upczak-Garcia

Buenos Aires is a cement Eden of sculpted saints and crumbling *confiterías*.

Any resemblance to actual or fictional persons or events in the following essay is strictly coincidental, and not the responsibility of the author

The lamp lit streets fill with the dizzying honey of gardenias sold by vendors. At midnight it is still early. The people are just beginning to arrive at smoky clubs and worn velvet tango bars. The night buzzes with ardor and longing, and the little lies that might be told to further the cause of love.

For *Porteros*, the citizens of Buenos Aires, human courtship more closely resembles the art of bullfighting than romance. Tabloids are full of roller coaster romances that read like parodies when compiled: *Paula Mazetti Weds Her Prince*, followed by *Mazetti's Shocking Split!* and six months later, declaring: *Mazetti Confesses: "It's Love for the First Time!"*

I strung my cupid's arrows

Under the city's romantic fervor, I strung my cupid's arrows and set aim at Andrea and Marco. They were two friends I first met teaching English, busy professionals whose pace on the hamster wheel of life had kept them from meeting the right person. One night I planned to introduce them at *Romario's*, a little pizzeria marked by its stunted palms and beautiful, indifferent waitresses.

Marco Perez Cuomo was my student, a lawyer who lived alone with his rotweillers in an eighth floor Palermo penthouse. His Italian blood manifested in his dark physique and zeal for American mob movies. Though unable to order bottled water in English, he insisted we cover shoot 'em-up slang with a cool Brooklyn accent. Although aggressive in his passions, Marco was the most genteel of men, his heart no smaller than the broad, wooly chest that covered it. He took tango lessons (I suspect less out of national pride than an admiration for Brando), opened doors, and dedicated Sundays to his widowed mother.

Where was he? It was unlike him to arrive so late. Andrea smoked absent-mindedly, looking discarded like the crusts on our plates. What was I thinking anyway? Leather and lace? I remembered: *sobre gustos no hay nada escrito.*

Carolyn McCarthy lives and writes in Boulder, Colorado. This is her second feature for South American Explorer.

Marco came in with eyes pink and swollen, sweat pooled the creases of his face. I motioned to a chair, but he remained standing. "It's Capone," he said. His favorite.

I ordered a round of draft beer.

"Helga is under the kitchen sink, whining and inconsolable," he said.

Courtship in Buenos Aires is the messiest of affairs.

Helga was wild as a whip, and in heat at an age too young to breed. Stately Capone courted her in a most uncharacteristic nervous manner, whimpering, pacing the house and barking at closed doors. The noisy antics of the unconsummated affair were keeping Marco up at night and out of his home office during the day. He left them on the balcony, with Helga fenced in a pen in the corner.

The doorman told him the news when he got home: Capone was found dead on the sidewalk. He had jumped too high charging Helga's pen.

Courtship in Buenos Aires is the messiest of affairs.

In Buenos Aires, emotions skirt the surface like varicose veins. I have seen women weep on the street and pummel their mates with handbags. Men don't hold back either. A short skirt might get you a discount on the bus, where a distinguished grandfatherly type delivers a come-on that makes you blush to your knee socks.

These infamous come-ons, called *piropos,* are so long and complicated you could turn the corner before your would-be suitor punctuates. I dropped a book at a bus stop and a pale youth stooped to pick it up. "Your father must have been a thief," he said, "taking the stars from the heavens and putting them in your eyes"....

Piropos annoyed and infuriated me; they made me feel as if I were walking naked through the streets. It was bad enough I had to work in stockings and skirts. I could no longer recite my college thesis on feminism. Some days I found myself on the verge of tears as I wobbled home in high heels, tired of the traffic and aggression in the city.

For now, courtship was still a cultural phenomenon to watch on the street. It was fascinating, and I was not unlike Jane Goodall, except I crouched behind newspapers in cafes and parks, observing mating practices. It was something I could do at arm's length, without worrying about personal implications. But all that soon would change.

The trouble started when my roommate's lover came to town. I lived with Gabriela and her sister Maria in a small Almagro apartment. Justin surprised Gabi with a phone call from the airport. "Guess where I am?" He said. She screamed.

"You must understand, babies. I love you guys so much," she said, stuffing us out the door while missing my cheek and kissing the air. "See you next week!"

Maria tried reaching two friends to put us up. She swore, flicking the lighter without success. Where could we go? Then the cell phone rang in her hand.

"Christian," she cooed. "It's been sooo long!"

A grandfatherly type delivers a come-on that makes you blush to your knee socks

Christian opened the door in a blue velour bathrobe and offered us Champagne in fluted glasses. "I hope you like it," he smiled, parting his feathered bangs from his face. "There's nothing else in the house"...

I didn't like it, the presumptuous flirting, and bubbly!—either prospect a guaranteed headache, but what could be

Photo by Anne Upczak-Garcia

done? I couldn't afford a hotel, and didn't know anyone else, so I hunkered down on a puffy recliner and settled in for what would prove a long weekend.

Maria came from simple means and, for her, Christian's apartment was a treasure trove. She threw her long legs on the leather couch and surfed all sixty channels twice, sipping her champagne. While he showered, she floated around the apartment opening cabinets and scrutinizing photos. In one he sported an argyle sweater, in his arms was a wiggling child in pigtails. "Divorced," Maria said, in a way that told me that they were involved.

That night I woke up in a burning sweat and flew at the bathroom fumbling for door handles, arriving in time to just aim as best I could. I tried to retrace the evening: *Bife de lomo* at an expensive supper club, wine, dancing, Christian's confession: he was lost in my blue eyes! He then tried to kiss me while Maria was in the ladies room. I pushed him away and offered a *mapa* to Maria. Then he tried again, oh, he couldn't help it: I was so beautiful when angry.

I retched into the bowl again. The night, the Malbec, the *bife de lomo*, everything was leaving my body via the shortest route. I considered looking up food poisoning in an encyclopedia. What would the word be in Spanish? Cold and just a bit soiled, the floor tiles still felt quite nice against my cheek.

At midday a tearful Maria appeared at my bedside. She and Christian were not getting along. She was going to take the train to her father's house in the country. When I tried to sit up my insides ebbed and rumbled, a hot sweat rose. My bowling-ball head sank back into the satin pillow. I cursed Maria for leaving me alone in the lion's den.

Luckily Christian turned out to be a good sport. Perhaps it was my reptile breath, or the non-appeal of seducing a woman engulfed by stuffed animals. He split. I found the fridge stocked with seltzer water, and bathroom drawers filled with hotel soaps and airline magazines. I washed, drew the bedroom shades and curled up in a ball. At least there were amenities.

Part of it was these guys just weren't my style. They smoked. They wore suits with shiny shoes. Their idea of working out was a lap around the park, followed by a Marlboro Light, or Sunday soccer with their buddies, but never with a girl. In private classes my female students made confessions like turn-of-the century spinsters in Freudian analysis. Even Laura, a savvy BancoSur executive, cut our lesson short to rush off to find a picture of a saint to put in a glass of water to catch a man— a recipe of her grandmother's.

My stateside friend Patty had heard about my captivity at Christian's and stepped in. "I don't know what's going on down there," she said over the fuzzy line, "but someone should be keeping an eye on you. I'll call my friend Rodrigo. We met in Boston. He's a doll."

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Café in San Telmo

Rodrigo greeted me at the door to his Recoleta flat, fully clothed in jeans and an ironed t-shirt. "Come on in," he said in perfect English. He offered wine to go with *la picada*, a snack of meat and cheese he was cutting up. "Sure," I said. We decided to start jogging together. He laughed as I told him stories about Patty, then got out his guitar and began to strum.

All this time I had been a passive outsider in the dating world of Buenos Aires. I had let myself be chosen, when what I should have done was choose. At the pool there was a guy named Adolfo. He had a perfect body and a shaved head. He suggested I vary my stroke.

"Swimming lessons for English lessons?" He agreed.

What was wrong with me? I was so much bolder than at home. I had walked onto a blank page. As infuriating as it proved not to be known or understood, it was equally pleasing to invent myself. I had just finished showering when Adolfo peeked his head in the locker room. *Carolina! I need your number,* he said.

It only seemed a little strange.

He called me on a Friday from the gym to invite me to have coffee and talk about his lessons. I heard barbells clanging in the background. I met him there, but we had to walk to his house so he could put his gym bag away. It was fifteen blocks. "Can't you take it with you?" I asked.

The apartment was small and spotless. Every piece of his metal furniture was painted cherry red. He offered me grapefruit juice, the staple of his diet apart from vitamins. "*Energia*," he said, toasting my glass. His hands seemed a bit jumpy.

"It is such a relief to meet someone like me," Adolfo said. Coffee became dinner. He cut his pizza elegantly with a knife and fork, quite pleased. "My last girlfriend has psychological problems, " he said. "Very clingy, not like an *American*."

My last girlfriend has psychological problems

He insisted on walking me home, but we had to stop back at his apartment first, so he wouldn't risk walking around with his wallet. I yawned, not used to walking thirty blocks on a date. He noticed and suggested that I stay at his apartment, on the pullout sofa. "Really, it is no problem," Adolfo assured, his thin brows arched like hands in prayer.

When no taxis passed by I determined to set out on foot. He walked quickly, skillfully trying to exhaust me into concession. "So when will you cook me dinner?" he asked. "Tomorrow? Next week?"

"Wouldn't be very *American* of me Aren't you leaving soon to lifeguard anyhow?" I asked, watching another Argentine perceive my coolness as coyness.

"Oh no," he said. "We could have one month, maybe more! You know, this time of year Mar del Plata is intolerable for the flies. *Se muerden.*"

God help me for asking what it meant. "*Morder,*" he said and before I could leap back Adolfo leaned over and bit me on the neck.

I got home safely and never returned to the pool.

Rodrigo chastised me as we lapped the park one night. "Are you crazy? You can't trust a man you meet in the street! This isn't Kansas."

"I'm from Colorado. We met in a pool. A *club*," I said, poking at his taste for social status.

"These men are different," he said, annoyed.

"And your love life is better?" I asked, breathless.

"I have no time. The practice needs me now, I could make partner.

Photo by Anne Upczak-Garcia

Photo by Anne Upczak-Garcia

Puerto Madero Discoteque

There is a girl, we have gone out a few times. I don't know if we have so much in common. Really, I have other things to think about." He sprinted ahead before I could ask more.

There was a message on my machine. Laura remembered she should set me up with an old friend, Pablo. Her high nasal voice was cut midstream: "Actually, I already gave him your number! You two would be so"— Beep.

No one wasted a female acquaintance.

Pablo sold insurance. He insisted we speak *Englich* because *hees* was so *goot*. "What is dis place?" he asked. The restaurant I had chosen served tamales and carbonata from the north, where the food was spicy and the people brown. My ethnic food was his peasant food. Before the waiter came I learned his favorite band was Kool and the Gang and his hobby was "dating ladies." Instead of wine I ordered a Coke so I could gulp it down and run.

In Buenos Aires, no one wasted a female acquaintance. If you weren't dating that person, you were passed to his friends and cousins like a package in a white elephant sale. Maxi was Rodrigo's best friend, an enormous rugby player that picked us up in his skeletal Chevette. He took us to a party in a funky basement in San Telmo.

"You are going to can't believe it!" he started the toast in his loud monotone. "I pass my TOEFL. I can make study in United States!" We danced to a mix of Boy George and Cumbia music. Maxi had inventive moves; he pranced and rolled his shoulders, making the coquettish expressions of a doll under his unibrow. I was having so much fun, I didn't notice Rodrigo had disappeared.

As the evening came to a close, he offered to take me home. "Maxi," I said, "that was great. We should get together. Like friends."

"I no have girls like friends," he said.

"Great!" I said, "I'll be your first." It didn't matter. When I leaned in for the customary kiss on the cheek, he got my lips and held them fast.

Gabi laughed when I told her. "Male and woman friends? *Why*? "

"Ok, let me get this right," I said, "Act as if I care, I get blown off, if I don't, they swarm. Is there any choice in the matter?"

"Oh, you are too peekee," she said, waving her cigarette. "Just peek one."

There was a blurb in the paper about a poetry reading. I dragged Rodrigo with me, assuming I'd have to fight off the avant-garde vampire youth of Buenos Aires for a seat. I arrived first, scanning a sea of white heads for his hawkish profile. There was no one here under fifty. Paulina, in a flowered scarf and nametag, circulated the crowd. Rodrigo arrived, curiously holding the curved handle of a large black umbrella. He introduced me as a visiting American writer. "Aye!" she remarked. "You'd like to read?"

I was to dutifully play Rodrigo's creation, too embarrassed to admit my work only appeared in coffee-stained notebooks. At intermission Paulina announced a special visitor. A photographer's bulb flashed in my face. Rodrigo beamed, pointing to me slouched behind a potted plant, "that's her!" People actually made their way over to shake my hand. One wondered if I could hand-deliver his manuscript to L.A., as if they were buying them at the airport. Another gentleman had a son studying medicine in Cincinnati.

I nodded politely and whispered to Rodrigo, "it's your fault if I start signing napkins!" My ego now hovered over the table, contemplating the great view. Below there was a little girl in a filthy sweatshirt who came up to sell us a rose.

Rodrigo shooed her away, "Don't bother. We're not *together*," he said. She rolled her eyes and tried again. He offered her a dish of ice cream and she eagerly dragged up a chair. Her name was Lucia. When he got up to go to the bathroom she whispered her questions:
"He's not your boyfriend."
"No." I was whispering too.
"Do you have a boyfriend?"
"No."
"Does he have a girlfriend?"
"No."
"Do you like him?"
"Umm. Yes."
"How old are you?"

We stepped out into a hard rain. Rodrigo opened the ridiculous umbrella, the kind last seen in old photographs

Parque Palermo

in supper clubs or a Julie Andrews movie. We waded slowly through the tilted cobblestones that filled with torrents of dark water. I wished I were still angry with him, not knowing what feeling replaced it. I wondered where Lucia would disappear to, what she did with the leftover flowers.

At three a.m. all the lights were on in my apartment, a bitten hunk of salami out on the counter and a cigarette shrinking in the ashtray. Gabriela was at her computer again. She gripped a paperback dictionary in her red manicured talons. "Help me," she pleaded, wearing pajama bottoms and a bikini top. "It's e-mail from Justin."

....Barbara's showed up...she's been screwing with me ever since she heard I went to visit you. But do I give a shit?...

"He's with her!" She cried, though I insisted otherwise. "Well, he's screwing her," she sniffed.

"No, no, no. The preposition changes the proposition." She looked at me confused. "Screw/screw with. NOT the same. Then there is *to give a shit*- to care. Very complex stuff," I said. She looked relieved.

"Fine," she said. "What should I do about that message I left him?"

"Well, he's screwing her," she sniffed.

One evening Rodrigo called while I was correcting papers. Listen to this, he said, and read me several poems:
estoy jodido
y radiante
quizá más lo primero
que lo segundo
y también
viceversa.

fixated with the stupid idea of love.

A chill leaped through me. "That's nice," I said, almost speechless. The next week I searched the bookstore for the anthology to look up those words. I still had no idea what they meant.

The question was driving me crazy, infringing on my daydream time in the subway and on the bus. What did he want? Had he been speaking *to* me or sharing *with* me? Had he been talking about me when I thought he was talking about someone else on our runs? Fortunately, everyone I knew happened to be an expert on these things.

"Does he see you on weekends?" Pamela asked. Sometimes. "Is he jealous of other men?" No, he introduces me to them. She shook her head. It wasn't looking good. "What perfume are you wearing?" She asked.

"Ban." I said. "Actually, it's a deodorant."

I was hopeless. Pamela waved her arms in disgust. "A perfume is your signature. It can take months to find the right perfume, the one that is you." She held out her wrist to demonstrate. Delicate flowers and almonds, very nice. "You spray it on the seven secret spots, and a tiny bit on your notes to him. He will think of you when you're not there." She shook her coiffed blonde head and sighed. "I should have taken French instead."

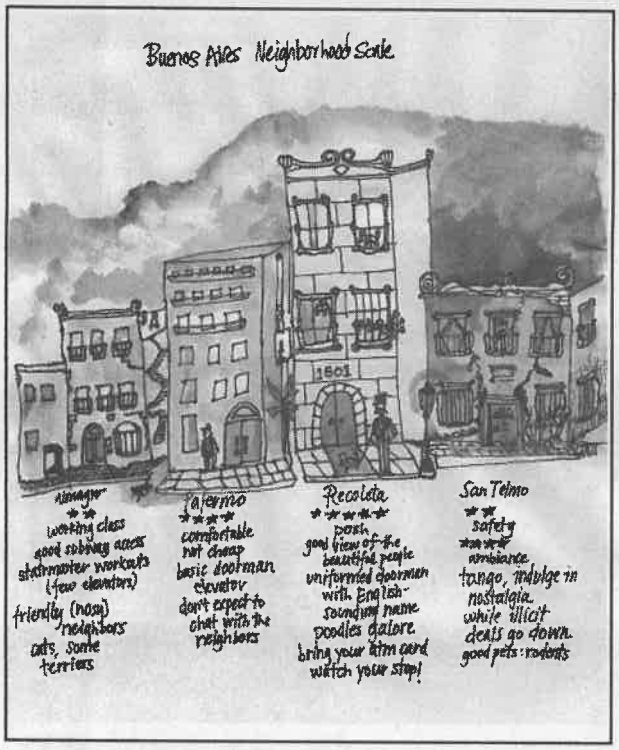
Pamela failed to recognize that I had arrived in Argentina with a backpack, not a set of leather luggage. I clung fast to the last vestiges of my Americanhood: my right to wear sneakers in public, criticize my government, give unelaborated yes or no answers and order food to go. Reading people was like reading Spanish. I mistook crazy for intense, friendly for interested and vice-versa. Now I had become like my new compatriots: driven by longing, and fixated with the stupid idea of love.

On my way home from work a lanky stranger in a long leather coat stopped me for the time. He said, "Does God know that one of his angels has fallen from heaven, and stands here in front of me?"

I had to smile. One had to admire their persistence. Then I realized, *piropos* had become only fixtures, like the antique streetlamps and handsome doormen.

Friday there was a message on my machine from Rodrigo. "Come over. I want to take you somewhere." While no one was looking, I jumped for joy.

The next morning, I woke up in a strange bed, looking at Rodrigo's closet full of Armani suits and wing tips. What had I done? I thought with a shudder. What would become of me in the city hundreds of miles from mountains and air, reading tabloids and searching for the perfume that would tell me who I was?



A few weeks later I was walking downtown when a horn blasted at my heels. "*Boludo*!" I cursed, only to look back and see Maxi. "I give you ride," he said. "Jump on!"

We took a circuitous route back to Palermo. Maxi was always confusing the one way streets and overshooting streets. I had even begun to give him directions as we meandered through Recoleta. He was nervous about moving to the states, now only one week away. "I know United States is so much more nice," he confided. "But I love this place. Look dis house so nice. Ah! Look dat one! Wait. I go there! It is house of Rodrigo's girlfriend."

I asked in Spanish to be sure.

He confirmed then looked at me in shock. He was frozen. Cars beeped and whizzed around us, curses and smog filled the Chevette. "O my God! You and Rodrigo no just friends? O my God! He no say....o my God..."

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I was unable to make my way to the bathroom, trapped behind the locking chairs of a couple making out. I had said excuse me. *Romario's* had filled up and all around there were couples holding hands, lighting each other's cigarettes, and stroking stray locks from each other's eyes. "Give me a break!" I said. There. They moved. A tango was playing:

Mi corazón es un niño
que no sabe lo que quiere
Una caricia lo alienta,
una illusión lo sostiene
(My heart is a child
who doesn't know what he wants
Fed by a caress,
sustained by an illusion)

Maybe the worst part was his denial of the whole thing. "I don't know what you're talking about," said Rodrigo. "What's the matter with you?"

In the bathroom I splashed some water on my face. I knew I sometimes behaved absurd, but I refused to be made to believe I was crazy by someone else. And that scene at the disco when I found out. After that, he gave up so easily. Me, for a boring Argentine aristocrat! A clueless woman that didn't even know I existed! Maybe if he had explained himself better, we could have started over...

And it wasn't just Rodrigo. It was a national epidemic. It was in the tabloids and the cat calls, the fashion frenzy, and the *nos* that dueled with *yeses*. Argentines loved the art of pursuit more than love itself.

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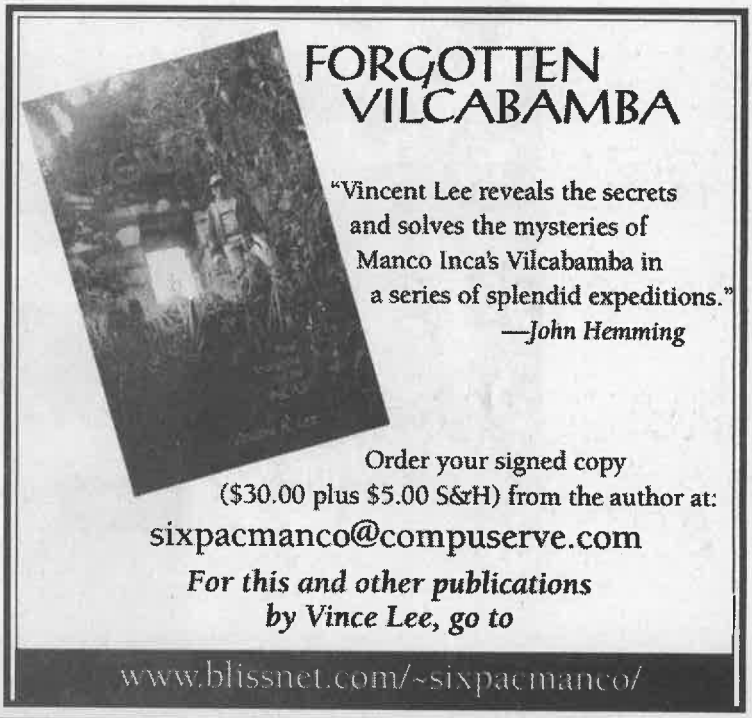
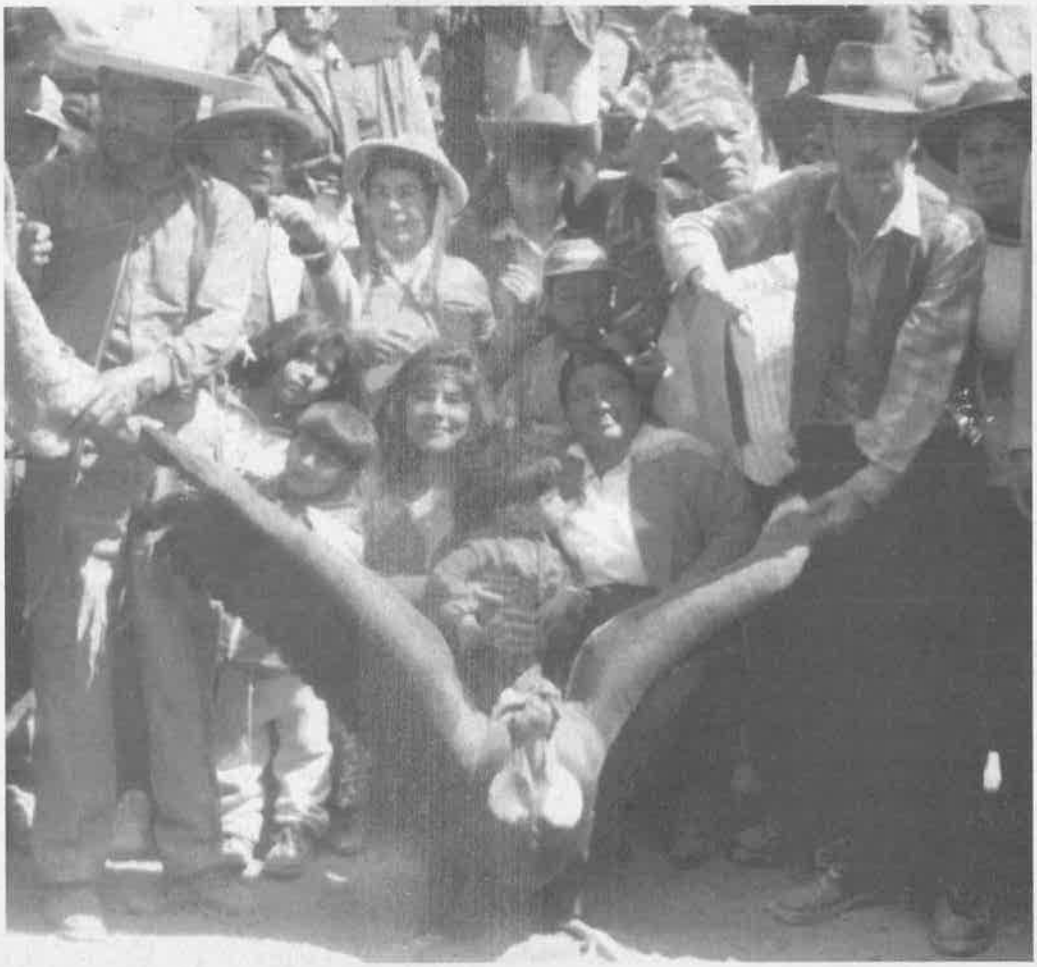
Somehow Andrea had pulled a smile out of Marco, now he bent to light her cigarette. I left them to get to know each other. The air outside was balmy. Spring was coming. I wished I smoked, for the moment begged for punctuation. The path home took me across the park where moon shadows danced behind palms. I thought about the night runs I used to take with Rodrigo. I hadn't been to the park in months. I watched as a cat slid under the iron gates of the Parque Botanico, seeking refuge among the winged statues of gods and saints. Dogs howled in the distance.





The Bull and the condor

Gunnar Engblom

For a Swedish biologist and ornithologist like myself, Peru is paradise.

Even before I'd made up my mind to make Peru my home, I was actively working with bird conservation projects. This naturally led to work as a guide and before long I had started up a small but growing ecotravel agency specializing in birdwatching.

Up to my ears in work, I still found time now and then to log on to one of the e-lists I subscribe to.

On this day, one message in particular catches my attention:

ITV/ Discovery film team interested in info on where to find Condors in large numbers in South America. Also looking to film close-ups of Condors, nesting, mating, feeding etc.

This is right up my alley. I offer my services. I've often seen Condors soaring above Colca Canyon in Southern Peru. Between December and March, Condors appear often in sizable numbers, to feed on dead sealions, fur seals, the occasional dead fetus, and placentas left on shore. I'd often taken groups to watch these magnificent birds flying along the coast. I also know of other locations to the South in Chile and Argentina where condors flock. Certainly these are all good spots to see condors.

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It was a fight to the death.

But there is another place to film this giant bird. For years I'd heard rumors of the Yawar Fiesta, a mysterious festival celebrated in the high Andes. From what I could learn from people who'd actually witnessed this festival, a condor is lashed to the back of a penned bull. When released, the enraged bull thrashes wildly to shake off the bird while the condor, roped to its back, pecks gaping wounds in the bull's gory neck. In times past, it was a fight to the death. Even today the fight figures on clay pots for sale in the Pisak market near Cusco.

Several weeks later I get a call from ITV/Discovery. Can I help with arrangements to film the Yawar festival? Although I was the one who initially suggested filming the Yawar Festival, I'm now overwhelmed with second thoughts. I'm not into blood sports. Wracked with doubts, I'm not sure I'm even mentally up for such an assignment. Will the Yawar festival be just part of a documentary on giant birds, or turn into a sensational exposé of a savage and cruel custom guaranteed to outrage viewers?

I keep weighing the pros and cons, one minute convinced this could be a great opportunity the next moment appalled at the whole idea. In the end I reason that it's somewhat like bullfighting. I don't much care for bullfighting but I can appreciate it as a traditional art, a ceremonial slaughter, if you will, not lacking a certain grace and beauty. I resolve to keep an open mind. Still, far from convinced that I'm making the right choice, I finally persuade myself with the old (and, I realize, ethically unsound) argument that if I don't take the job with ITV, somebody else will. Then too, I reason, times have changed. We live in a civilized society. Mindless cruelty to animals is no longer tolerated. Throughout Peru, I'm told, this ancient "fight to the death" has been outlawed. If it's illegal, there probably won't be much to film anyway.

Later in Cusco I unexpectedly run into Gregorio (Goyo) Ferro, an old friend. Through the years, we have worked together on many conservation projects in the Andes. Over coffee, I fill him in on the filming project that brings me to Cusco. The Yawar Fiesta? Of course he's heard of it. He knows for certain of one village Cotobambas in the Departamento of Apurimac, where the festival lasts two or three days. The villagers celebrate with bullfights, singing, dancing, drinking and, every year, there is always at least one bull and condor fight, sometimes more. Even better, it so happens his brother is the ex-mayor of Cotabambas. A stroke of luck for me. In Peru, family connections open doors.

Catching a condor is a hazardous occupation.

With the arrival of the film crew just weeks away, I'm having trouble researching the story. Some insist the fight between the bull and condor represents the war between the Incas (condor) and the Conquistadores (Bull). Others, equally adamant, say no. The fight symbolizes the clash between the pure Quechua Indians of the highland, ancestors of the mighty Inca—and the mestizos, coastal peoples, Indians with European blood. Many believe that, unless the crazed and wounded bull can mortally crush its adversary, it will (unlike the Spaniards) die from exhaustion and loss of blood. When this happens, the condor is released and flies away.

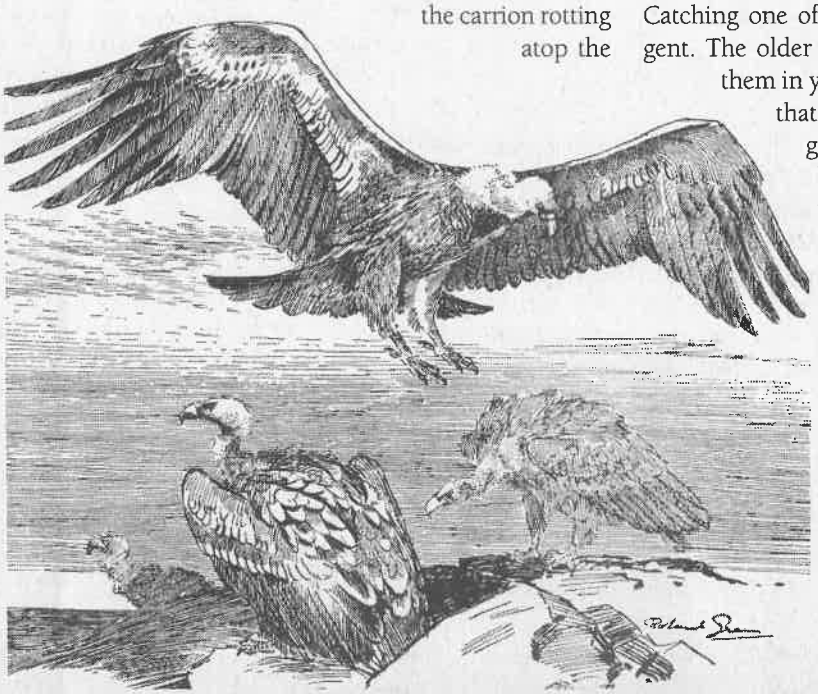
Goyo disagrees with both. According to him, the fight of bull and condor is not so much the symbolic reenactment of the battle between Inca and Spaniard that I've heard about, although he concedes this may be true in part. In his opinion the struggle has more to do with cosmology—Andean divinities and messengers to the Gods—than history. Above all, it's fundamentally a religious ceremony. And, he assures me, it is rare nowadays for either bull or condor to be seriously hurt.

Cotobambas is a long five hour bus ride from Cusco over a winding dusty road. We cross the deep gorge of the Apurimac river on the way. The film crew is bringing a brand new Macintosh computer as a donation for the school in Cotobambas. We pull into the village on July 28th, Peru's Independence Day. Off from school, a horde of kids flocks around the truck, climb aboard and peer inside. There are no hotels in Cotobambas so Goyo's brother has arranged for us to stay in the school. The local police helped to set up beds for us. To return the favor Colin Collis, the director of our film crew, has brought along three footballs from England. Each ball is imprinted with Manchester United logo. Colin ceremoniously hands

the first ball out of the sack to the chief of police. Soon some men and boys are kicking an English ball on the plaza. Not the police chief. I catch him secretly tucking his treasure under his coat.

Three weeks before the festival both the Mayor and Governor of Cotabambas choose separate teams, each entrusted with the task of capturing a condor. This assignment is serious business. Among Andean peoples the condor is an Apu, a term reserved for the Gods of the high mountains with dominion over the rain, cold and heat. Apus are revered for their power to ensure bountiful harvests, multiply the herds of cattle—sheep, llama and alpaca, ward off disease, and bring prosperity to the village and family. The Apukuntur (condor God) moreover, is the messenger between the mountain gods and the Sun God Inti. Possessed of such powers it is easily seen why the condor inspires fear and awe. Catching a condor is a hazardous occupation for every member of the team. If not done right—if the condor is injured for example— you can bring serious misfortune, even death, down upon yourself, your family, your village, your livestock etc. To ward off the fury of the condor Apu and limit the risk, it is usual for the condor catching team to enlist the services of a *brujo,* or witch doctor. Even then things can go badly. The *brujo* who was in charge last year, we were told, died mysteriously. Most everyone will tell you that the best *brujos* are also notorious cattle rustlers. Nonetheless, as long as the *brujo* is directing the trapping of the condor, he is accorded the highest respect.

I have read of several ways to trap a condor. In one a man sits below a blind with a hole in the top. When the condor descends to feed on the carrion rotting atop the blind, the trapper reaches through the hole and grasps the condor by the feet.



In Cotobambas, trapping the condor is less dramatic. The trapping team first kills an old horse and drags it to a remote area. The carcass is then left outside. It's important the area chosen be sheltered, since an enclosed area limits the available air and makes it difficult for the bird to take off. Members of the team will hide nearby. Before everything, though, certain rituals require strict observance. First of all it is critical that the horse be duly honored. The horse is not seen as bait to entice the condor, rather it is regarded as a sacrifice to the Apus and Pachamama (mother earth). To perform the sacred sacrifice the *brujo* commands kindling be heaped up and lit. Once the fire is ablaze the *brujo* directs the bringing forth of aguardiente, corn of various varieties, and secret spices and herbs. These are fed into the fire.

To commune properly with the spirits, the *brujo* and others partaking in the ceremony must be spiritually fit. To reach this state requires imbibing a generous supply of alcohol, but first an offering to the gods is in order. As he opens each bottle of aguardiente, therefore, the *brujo* pours some on the ground. With this gift to Pachamama he implores the goddess for her blessing . He promises that no harm will come to the condor and that it will honored and treated with respect at all times during the festival.

The ceremony over and with the dead horse in position the *brujo* and his men hunker down out of sight. It can take many long hours to complete their work. Catching a condor requires patience. A mature condor is recognizable by it's red head, white collar, and wing patches. Catching one of these is not likely. Condors are intelligent. The older birds will know the tricks used to trap them in years past. They will avoid sheltered areas that lack wind for a quick takeoff and be on guard for any signs of humans. It's more likely the team will catch one of the younger, less experienced birds.

Once condors spot the dead horse from on high, they will circle, sometimes soaring on the winds for days on end. Eventually, a few birds will fly down to perch on nearby rocks. There is a definite pecking order among condors. Until several of the "top" birds approach, none will move in too close. This may take hours, but waiting for the right moment is the key to success. If the *brujo* and his crew fail to catch a condor now there will be no second chance this year.

It's best if the condors start feeding early or at least some hours before sunset. This will give the huge birds sufficient time to gorge themselves. Every pound of dead horse the condor consumes will make takeoff more difficult. From their hiding places the men watch cautiously, waiting for the *brujo's* signal. When it comes at last all shout loudly. Jumping up, they rush in to encircle the birds. This year all goes as planned. Several giant birds fly up and away, but when the dust clears several men cling warily to their flapping prize—a brown immature condor.

Of the two condor catching teams this year only the mayor's team succeeds in bringing back one of the immense birds. Bull-condor fights are scheduled for both the 29th and 30th of July. July 29th is the mayor day to lead the ceremony. July 30th it will be the Governor's turn. This year however, the Governor's team failed to capture a condor. To help him out the mayor has graciously offered to lend him "his" condor on the 29th.

A condor reeling from alcohol is a thing of the past.

While in custody the condor is affectionately cared for and treated as a guest of honor, distinguished compadre and good friend. An embroidered scarf with the emblem of the village is ceremoniously draped around the Condor's neck. As befits it's lofty status, the condor is provided with food and drink worthy of it's station. In captivity the condor feasts on meat. Slices of the finest cuts are served up as well as generous amounts of beer and chicha (a local brew made of corn). Formerly, the bird was plied with abundant amounts of *aguardiente*—a powerful liquor. Old timers tell of seeing Condors at earlier festivals stagger about, obviously blitzed. This is no longer allowed. The *Instituto Nacional de Recursos Naturales*, the Peruvian ministry in charge of wildlife, forbids giving the condor any food or drink that might endanger it's health. A condor reeling from alcohol is a thing of the past.

July 28th dawns. The ITV crew checks it's gear, runs a few tests and gets ready. It's a glorious day and villagers, streaming towards the plaza, are decked out in their finest clothes. On this day the condor will be presented to the public. Excitement grips the crowd.

The condor is brought in to the plaza. To show off it's magnificent wingspan the mayor on the left holds one outstretched wing, a local dignitary the other. As musicians strike up a joyous dance, the crowd circles the plaza drinking beer, laughing, cheering — a happy crowd on this festival day.

I scan the crowd. Except for me, the British film crew of four, a German with high-tech camcorder and an Asian film crew, there are no other foreigners around. The Yawar festival, unlike many other Peruvian celebrations is, for the most part, still "undiscovered".

The following day begins with bull fights. We watch four or five. No bulls are killed in these encounters. After a while the judges pick the best bullfighter. Many in the crowd disagree. "Too short, the fight was too short!" they yell. Next to me a woman screams her support for the winner. "It's the bull's fault. The bull was slow.

Condors

Sacred Cows of the Andes

The range of the Andean condor extends from Patagonia in the South to Venezuela in the North. Over much of this territory the condor is either extinct or threatened. Reintroduced into Venezuela, where they had been extinct for decades, the condor were all found shot by someone who feared they were "bad for tourism."

In Ecuador and Colombia condor numbers have dwindled over the years. Today most estimates put the population at a few hundred birds. There is no census data for Peru, though most experts believe the number has dropped significantly over the last three or four decades. Colca Canyon and the surrounding area is the only accessible place in Peru where the condor is regularly sighted and, indeed, seems to be thriving. Patagonia and the Chile/Argentine Andes also boast sizable populations.

In many parts of South America, especially in the northern Andes, the condor is mistakenly blamed for killing livestock, especially calves and young animals. Untold thousands of birds have been slaughtered for this reason. The conviction that condors harm livestock is also widely held in Peru. Nonetheless, the condor is venerated as a god in the province of Apurimac and some other parts of the country. This exalted status is apparent during the Yawar Festival, where the condor is accorded all the reverance due a powerful deity and kept from harm, lest it return to wreak havoc on the herds.

The condor is a common sight over the mountains of Apurimac. The Yawar Festival, celebrated in Cotobambas and other remote Andean villages, is a yearly celebration of the condor as god. Viewed in this light the Yawar Festival is not a barbaric blood sport that's survived into modern times but, instead, an act of worship. Like the holy cows of India, the condor in Apurimac and other mountain areas, is the holy bird of the Andes.

The bullfighter fought well!" she yells with authority.

Finally, around three in the afternoon, comes the moment all have been waiting for. On a splendid black horse seated upon a finely worked saddle with bit and reins of silver, the mayor arrives. He acknowledges the cheers of the throng by waving his black sombrero. As on the day before the condor is paraded around the plaza.

When the applause subsides the condor is escorted to a small corral holding several young bulls. One bull, separated from it's companions, is stamping and snorting in a small pen. To prepare the bull for the fight two incisions are sliced into it's back. Ribbons threaded through these cuts are then lashed tightly to the legs of the condor.

The moment has arrived. As the gate is thrown open the maddened bull storms into the plaza weaving this way and that as it tries to shake off the screeching condor. Tethered to the bloody back of the bull, the condor wildly flaps it's wings, attempting to keep it's precarious balance. Lest bull or condor sustain serious injury the event is short-lived, brought to an end after just a few minutes. Lassos snare the bull and several attendants guide it to an enclosure. The condor feet are untied—for this day the fight is finished.

The following day follows much the same course as the first. The morning is marked by a series of bull fights. Then, in the afternoon, the governor arrives. Once again the condor is strapped to the back of the bull with ribbons laced through incisions in the bulls skin. Like the day before, the bull crazed from the talons of the condor digging into it's back, charges into the plaza. But this day is different. After swerving this way and that, the tortured animal veers suddenly away from the shouting crowd and charges straight toward the gate of the corral, which has been left partly open. As the panicked bull bolts toward freedom, the condor is struck sharply by the overhanging crossbar.

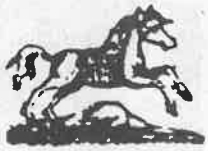
A hush falls on the crowd. Uncertain and fearful, many tremble, dreading the consequences. And, indeed, over the next half hour the sky turns noticeably grayer, and the temperature drops. Thunder clouds seem to appear out of nowhere and soon a heavy rain splashes down on the plaza, turning in an instant, to violent hail. Such a downpour is a rarity in this parched region of the Andes, especially in July, the dry season. The crowd is apprehensive. The Apus are angry.

The morning of July 31st is the day the condor should be released. Throughout the village people talk in whispers. The condor has been taken to the mayors house. Many are fearful. Nobody seems to know for certain. If the condor has been injured, the gods will surely exact a swift and terrible revenge. Tension mounts. Finally that evening comes word that the condor is well. It's release is set for the following day.

Mid-morning on July 31st the crowd has gathered above the village. Here, a steep slope drops off overlooking a vast view of the Apurimac valley, wide and deep. The condor is hauled up in a large wooden crate. The mayor and governor are in attendance. A band plays "waynos" in a five-tone scale that sounds almost Chinese. Nowhere have we heard "El Condor Pasa" (The Condor Passes). The absence of this popular Peruvian composition, is proof that we have wandered far from the tourist path.

The condor, taken from its cage, sits atop the slope. It looks from left to right, then fixes the crowd with its baleful gaze, seeming to memorize each face. According to local belief the condor flies off with a message to the mountain Apus and ultimately to Inti—a message telling of its reception by the people. At last the condor shuffles clumsily towards the cliff's edge, unfolding its awesome wings. The crowd is silent. Then with several strokes of its massive wings the condor soars up into the skies. All are overcome with relief. The condor is well and there is no cause to fear. Soon the condor is but a speck in the distant sky.

The ITV crew packed up for a some filming at Machu Picchu and Colca Canyon and left Peru shortly thereafter. That was in 1999. I have yet to see the documentary about the condor and the Yawar Fiesta. I have no television myself, and the videos sent by the film-crew won't work in Peru. But when I get to watch it I'll bet almost anything I won't be surprised by the musical sound track: It's almost certain to be El Condor Pasa.



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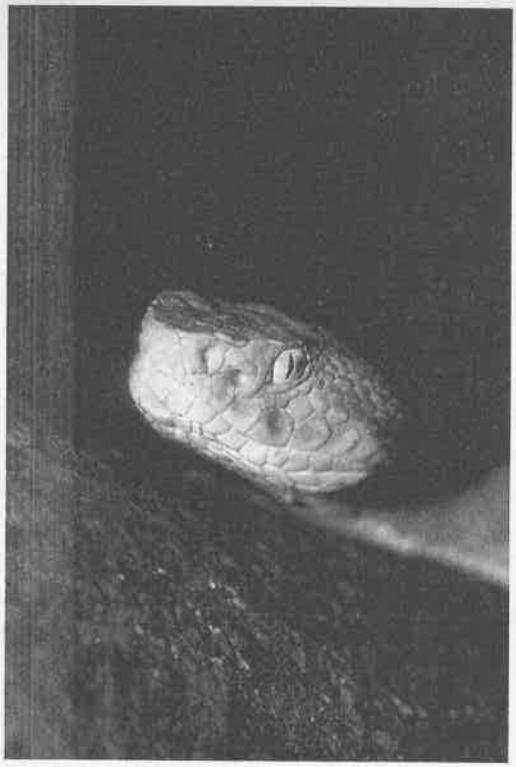
Vipers, dangling from the trees, attacked.



This snake is found nowhere else in the world— only here.

Photos by Marcio Martins Dan Paulo, Departamento de Ecologia, Instituto de Biociencias, Brasilniversidade de San Paulo

Snake Island

Robin Eveleigh

A deserted island where the forest floor writhes with the world's most venomous vipers, a tragic fisherman found dead on his boat, its deck awash with his blood, and a lighthouse keeper and his family massacred in a nocturnal snake invasion of their isolated cottage home.

It might sound like the starting point for some tacky, low-budget horror flick, but there is some fact behind this fiction. What's more, the tales have a purpose that goes beyond mere fireside entertainment. Chilling by design and passed down from fisherman father to son, they perpetuate the myths surrounding the forbidden shores of Brazil's Snake Island.

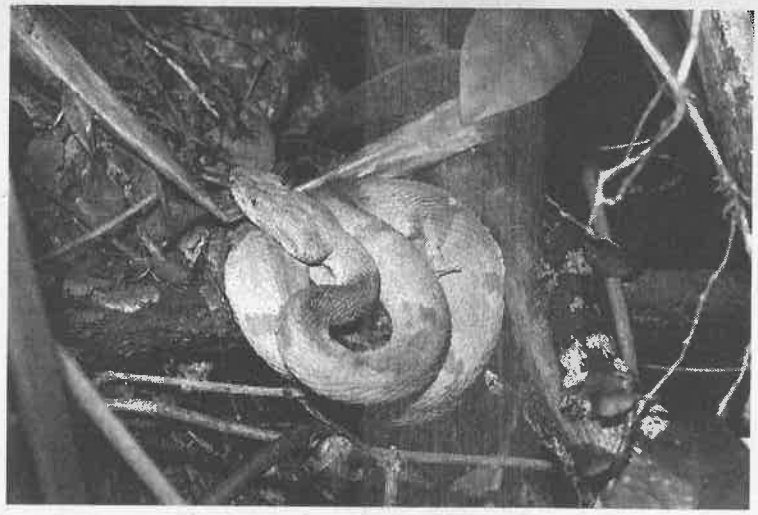
That's the name locals have given to Ilha de Queimada Grande, a speck of land off Brazil's south-east coast. There, a unique species of the fer-de-lance pit viper, armed with a highly potent venom and found only on the island's 430,000 square metres, is jungle king. Legend says that the snake guards its forest realm with brutal ferocity. Real life has responded with a Brazilian navy ban forbidding man to set foot on the island.

In Brazil, snakes don't command the same hysterics as they do in, say, the UK, even though your chances of seeing one are pretty much limited to glass cases in reptile houses and photographers on Blackpool beachfront with bored pythons draped around their shoulders. In Brazil, particularly in the countryside where they are abundant, snakes get healthy respect and provoke the kind of ignorant fear born of hearsay and hand-me-down fiction.

But of the country's four venomous serpents, the infamous fer-de-lance of the genus *Bothrops* is undoubtedly

Robin Eveleigh is a freelance journalist who spent three years in South America, living in Brazil and travelling in Peru, Bolivia, Colombia, Argentina, Chile and Paraguay. He has written for BBC Wildlife, Geographical, the Financial Times and the Independent. He is now based in London and can be contacted on: kitnews@hotmail.com

the most feared. With over thirty different varieties, this snake is responsible for the vast majority—almost 90%—of all snake bites in Brazil, where around 20,000 people fall foul to snakes—and 100 die as a result—each year.



Named by French settlers for its characteristic lance-shaped head, the fer-de-lance is found all over Latin America, from Mexico to Argentina. Although it prefers forest regions, it is highly adaptable and thrives in a variety of environments. It prefers to hunt under the cover of darkness and is sometimes found lying on paths and trails at sundown, possibly attracted by the warm stonework. This is one of the reasons it counts so many humans among its victims.

What I remember most is the incredible pain

But it is not just this snake's prevalence that makes it a creature to be feared. The fer-de-lance also comes equipped with a particularly nasty venom: a necrosing element causes living tissue to rot, which can result in the loss of limbs. Also, anti-coagulants in the venom cause some victims to bleed to death, especially if they employ the old 'remedy' of cutting the bite to suck out the poison. One embarrassed bite victim, 24-year-old woodcutter Jisto Dutra do Sousa, was bit by a fer-de-lance coiled in his wood stacks. He spent almost two weeks recovering in hospital. "It's the first time I've been bitten, and what I remember most is the incredible pain," he recalled from his hospital bed. "It was immediate." Eleven days later he still showed the early symptoms of a fer-de-lance bite—hemorrhaging and necrosis along with the crusted, fading blood blisters surrounding the wound on his left arm.

The fer-de-lance has a fearsome reputation in the coastal town of Itanhaém, the nearest mainland port to Queimada Grande. The town's fishing community simply does not go to the island. Few fishermen, if any, would be willing to defy the navy's ban to transport a nosey passenger to the island, even for money. But they are happy to explain just why they steer clear.

Queimada Grande is infested with one of the world's most poisonous snake —five to a square meter, some locals warned me. You have to hop, skip and jump over their snapping heads to avoid being bitten. I was regaled with the story of the fisherman who went ashore to pick bananas and got bit. Somehow he managed to struggle back to his boat where he bled to death and was found sprawled on his blood-soaked deck. And then there's the one about the island's last lighthouse keeper. One night snakes crawled in through his windows, so the story goes. As the lighthouse keeper, his daughter, two sons, and wife fled in panic through the forest, vipers dangling from the trees attacked. The crew of a navy vessel on a routine supply drop found the bodies strewn across the island.

Such stories might keep the locals at bay, but they only made me more curious. To reach the island myself, I turned to the Butantan Institute in Brazil's sprawling economic capital of Sao Paulo. A snake research center unrivalled in Latin America, the Institute produces almost all of Brazil's antivenin. Here, a small team of scientists has been working on a ten-year study of Queimada Grande's fer-de-lance—the Golden Lancehead (Bothrops Insularis). From these experts I began to learn the facts behind the Snake Island fiction.

Though the horror tales have been embellished to discourage the curious, they do have some basis in fact. The venom of the Golden Lancehead has all the anti-coagulant properties of the regular fer-de-lance. Probably through natural selection, the Golden Lancehead has developed an unusually potent venom. While not the world's deadliest snake, its venom is thought to be the fastest-acting of all fer-de-lance species. And there is a large number of Golden Lanceheads on the island. The population grows unchecked, as the snake has no natural predators.

The Golden Lancehead feeds almost exclusively on a diet of small birds. For this reason, the kill must be fast, lest dinner fly away and drop into the sea. Other snakes that feed on mammals can bite and track a struggling rodent to it's place of death some distance away. With no mammals on the island, the Golden Lancehead has developed some unusual tree-climbing behavior. The snake nestles in high branches, waiting for an unwary meal flit down through the forest canopy. This perhaps accounts for its many human victims, caught like the lighthouse keeper and his family, unawares.

He bled to death and was found sprawled on his blood-soaked deck.

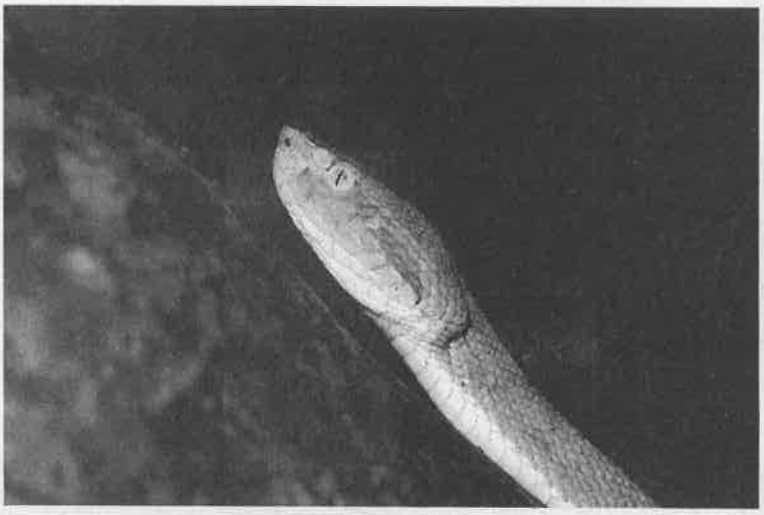
Marcelo Duarte is a biologist and Queimada veteran, with 21 field trips under his belt. He invited me along on one of his trips for which he had permission from the Brazilian navy. Torrential rains thwarted our first attempt to reach the island. It was another month before we finally chugged out of Itanhaém, tossed by waves that crashed over the sand bar protecting the harbor. Three hours of tummy torment later, we reached the relatively calm and sheltered waters surrounding Snake Island. Its sheer rocky sides rose up from the ocean's deep blue. A lone penguin, lost on its way north from Argentina, bobbed on gentle waves.

Queimada is beautiful, its vegetated flanks rising steeply and capped with the dense forest. Gulls wheel about its shoreline, waiting for the fishing boats that trawl the waters. After a rough approach in a tiny dinghy, and a hazardous struggle in sloppy waves over slippery rocks, we scrambled ashore under the curious gazes of nesting Brown Booby (Sula leucogaster). This low on the island, researchers have spotted only one Golden Lancehead, so I figured the Brown Booby chicks and my ankles were safe, for the time being. Even so, I took the pair of leather leg guards, knee-length wrap-around shin-pads, that they handed me. We then set off on the short, steep climb through the bush to Queimada's lighthouse. From there, the trail stretched to the island's highest point, a mile through the dense forest up along the island ridge.

Bending low, wary of the vipers' tree-climbing propensities, wishing I had eyes in the back of my head, I followed the team into the forest. I was happy that the doctor, carrying his black bag stuffed with serum, accompanied us. Vines tugged at my feet, thorns snagged at my clothes. Serpent fangs, happily, did not.

"We don't know what happens if a human gets bitten," explained Marcelo. Serums are species-specific. The antidote for a rattlesnake bite is different than that for a fer-de-lance. "We know the serum for the normal fer-de-lance will work, but we don't know how much to use, or exactly how it will affect the victim." Given the thickness of Queimada's undergrowth, and total impossibility of guarding every one of your limbs, I imagine it's only a matter of time before we find out.

The Golden Lancehead's venom is unique. This is one of the reasons why Marcelo and his team are so interested. "Who knows what secrets it holds? This snake is found nowhere else in the world—only here," he shrugs. "Maybe the venom contains a new protein that will unleash a medical breakthrough, a new treatment or medicine?"



We see our first snake just meters from the start of the trail. A full-grown Golden Lancehead sits coiled on top of an old dirt-filled stone water tank. It is a surprisingly light yellow compared to its browner continental cousin, but still well camou-

flaged against the leaf groundcover. At first it makes no attempt to move as we peer over the stone shelf, but we have little time to appreciate the creature in this natural setting. The team bursts into hurried activity, coaxing the viper into a plastic tube. Once contained it can be handled safely, measured, weighed and sexed. A tiny transponder or microchip is then inserted under its skin. This gives the snake a unique numeric identity. If it turns up on future field trips, the biologists can follow its development. While our team fusses over the delicate procedure, our sharp-eyed doctor spots two more vipers, coiled less than a meter away. They soon receive the same treatment and are sent on their way.

Thankfully, rumors of a writhing forest floor prove somewhat exaggerated. Our eyes sweep the area as we walk, scanning above and below our heads, for snakes. It's a mystery how many Golden Lanceheads exist, but its numbers are low enough for the species to be considered at 'extreme risk of extinction.' While the Golden Lancehead thrives on Queimada, "A single fire could wipe the species out," says Marcelo. "It would be lost forever."

In the past, extermination was the goal of some mainland locals, who dreamed of turning Queimada into an off-shore banana plantation. They set a series of bush blazes, igniting fires that took their toll on the snake population. This, together with a number of field trips, most notably in the 40s and 50s, lowered the Golden Lancehead population dramatically. Hundreds of specimens were removed for lab study. The snakes even suffered at the hands of a lighthouse keeper. In the ten years between 1914 and 1924, this man became the most fearsome predator, killing over 500 Golden Lanceheads.

"It's too early to estimate the island's current population," says Marcelo, "but we've logged 400 individuals so far, on this trail alone. By the end of the study, we'll have a better idea. What we usually find along the trail is one snake every ten minutes. That said, we've discovered where there's one, there's usually more."

Marcelo's ten-minute-rule proves surprisingly accurate over the next day and a half, as we find another 30 or so vipers. But much to my disappointment, I've yet to see any snakes in trees. At the end of the trail, in a sunlit clearing, we come upon two Golden Lanceheads on the forest floor. Overhead I spy three more coiled in the sparse, spindly branches. High in the tree tops, they wait for dinner. The three snakes in the treetops are the last vipers I see before we hurry back along the trail to make it off the island before sundown.

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Chile

A Story of Gold and Quicksilver

Dr. Ralph E. Pray

Chile can be a very friendly and pleasant country to visit. Some of the biggest Chilean smiles are for mining engineers arriving in Santiago.

For arrivals from the U.S. it's a welcome change. Chile can look back on a long history of mining and has, today, one of the most progressive mineral industries in the Western Hemisphere. Chile was producing gold to finance Spain's wars almost one hundred years before the first pilgrim set foot on Plymouth Rock. Gold production has continued since about 1530.

Coming from the States, where interest in mining is at an all-time low, Chile's rich, old mining culture is like a first date, full of promise. I'm traveling from L.A. to examine a large underground gold mine project for U.S. financial interests. For me, working underground goes back to Pioche, Nevada. There, in 1946, fresh out of New York, I worked as a teenage ore-car trammer.

As we drive to the Chile gold mine one of the Chilean engineers asks if I'd like to see a trapiche operation. It's just off of the highway, processing ore from a small gold mine. This sounds like a good idea. I've seen, designed, or built just about every kind of ore-processing plant around, but never a trapiche. We stop off at Plante California a few klicks out of Illapel, between Santiago and La Serena. A simple open roof covers two large rotating wheel assemblies, shiny wet with brown slurry. The lights are on, the motors humming. Two men running the plant greet us with smiles.

Dr. Pray has degrees from the University of Alaska, where he was Territorial Assayer, and from the Colorado School of Mines. He is owner of the Mineral Research Laboratory in California and has mined, prospected, and consulted widely since 1946.

I'm fascinated. One man shovels rock in the large concrete tub while the other squeezes mercury off of the amalgam plates with his fingers. Seeing the operation in all its simplicity, makes me wonder how I could have missed all this in over fifty years of mining work, travel, and study.

Rooted to the spot, I watch for twenty minutes before unlimbering the photographic equipment. My interpreters work double-time to satisfy my curiosity. The video of the trapiche I shoot this first day has been shown in New York skyscrapers and mansions in Beverly Hills.

On my daily trips to the mine I keep returning to this site as a visitor, or more precisely, as a student, to view my "discovery" one more time. While it's unique to me, it's "old hat" to my hosts, of course, just part of everyday life. The plant processes over ten tons of ore every 24 hours. Pyrite, the glittering iron sulfide, sparkles in the rock. At different times someone shovels ore into the trapiche bowl, and periodically releases the slurry. Once the gold is removed, the slurry containing the finely-ground waste is drained out of the trapiche bowl, pumped uphill and discharged beside the plant.

I climb the soft trail to the top and view the flat crown of the tailings with alarm. It is huge! Pacing it off along the built-up wall around the edges, I calculate the mass at several hundred thousand tons. The ground ore must go back many, many years. I've seen a few mills, centuries old, south of Santiago that used mule teams to turn the huge stone wheels. Is this the site of such a mill? I feel like I'm standing on a history book.

My mind is racing. Can it be true?

Standing atop this huge artificial mountain the big question I have is: what values remain in this vast heap? The man operating the trapiche is also the mine owner. He is leasing the plant to treat his ore. I climb back down to the plant and put the question to him.

"How much gold is in the ore you bring in here?"

"It assays eighteen grams."

That's almost six-tenths of an ounce per ton.

"What is your recovery?"

"About half. The relave gets the other nine grams. But there's nothing we can do about it. It's the same old problem with every trapiche."

"Some of your gold is in the pyrite?"

"Yes, that's the part we can't get. The mercury can't pick it up."

My mind is racing. Can it be true? I do the math; with gold selling for $270 per ounce, nine grams is worth $75. That's gold sitting here going to waste. Taking just half of that value for the whole pile would be 11.25 million dollars for the first 300,000 tons. Methods of recovering this gold might be new in Chile, but not up north where I come from.

Five minutes later I've climbed back on top of the relave with four sample bags. I take one sample where the pipeline spits out the slurry. An assay of this material will tell the story — if nine grams of gold per ton is realistic or just wild talk. I take three more samples of dry sand at different points, digging down just a few inches. If the surface samples assay as claimed, we can follow up later with auger samples taken through the thirty-foot depth of the mound.

Just as I finish sampling, an associate of the trapiche owner shows up all agitated and wringing his hands. He's worried about the samples I've taken.

"Is there a problem with mercury?" I ask, realizing that this artificial mountain situated above the city, and above the river, is probably laced with mercury made even more toxic by reacting with sulfides in the ore.

"It's a serious business," he says, frowning deeply.

"I didn't know. I'm sorry. I'll dump the bags out."

"No," he says kindly. "It's okay to keep them."

Just back in L.A. after a thirteen-hour flight I rush to the lab and heat the furnace up to 2000 degrees for the twenty-eight step fire-assay procedure. I then get to work on the high-priority four samples. The first sample assays just over 8 grams of gold per ton. All four samples together average 5 grams per ton. This makes it worth going back with an auger to take deep samples.

It may also be a good idea to look at other relaves. From the information I've been able to gather, there are literally hundreds of trapiche plants formerly or currently operating in Chile. Buying gold at each trapiche plant for cash, at a small discount, is something to consider. Mining Professor Claudio Canut de Bon, from the University of La Serena, knows much about trapiches and kindly furnishes me with many technical papers of value. I immediately send off letters to fellow members of the American Institute of Mining Engineers in Chile, and to fellow graduates of the Colorado School of Mines working in Chile. All this correspondence produces little of value. Mining engineers trained in the U.S. deem the trapiche too primitive to be useful.

With equipment I've tracked down across the U.S. I come up with a project to recover the mercury and gold in Chile's relaves. First I design a plant to retort the mercury and roast the sulfides in the relave sands. This is followed by fine-grinding and agitation in cyanide to extract gold.

With funding for the project provided by a New York syndicate, I return to Chile with a detailed agenda. Our group is large enough to require a minibus. First we visit the U.S. embassy, assorted banks, and meet with attorneys, government functionaries, mine owners, mine co-op presidents, engineers, geologists, and business leaders. Then, additional meetings at university and analytical laboratories, and private research firms in Santiago. The travel and meetings take weeks. Business is conducted at a slower pace in Chile.

Gold-selling is a secretive business.

In the meantime additional samples secured with an auger are sent to first-rate Chilean laboratories with a one-day turn-around. While this is going on I charter a Cessna to fly below the Andes escarpment. I'm looking for old relaves from long ago. Back on the ground I rent a four-wheel drive and head off to visit and sample each of the sites I've mapped from the air. Taken together the total quantity of relave material available to the project amounts

Homes built atop a relave

to over five million tons. That's the upside. At the same time I've been forced to realize that not one relave contains much material that assays at over five grams per ton. Most, in fact, assay at about two grams per ton or less. Given the current low price of gold this does not bode well for the project.

The despondency I encounter among the trapiche operators is, I think, linked to this low price of gold. The Chilean government, out of greed and a lack of good sense, places a heavy tax on the sale of raw gold. The small gold producers and trapiche operators get around the tax by selling to jewelers at just below market. My L.A. associates repeatedly try to get in on this business in a big way. Brinks is standing by to transport bullion to a waiting U.S. refinery. But in Chile, gold-selling is a secretive business with its own cultural norms. The gold melts untaxed into the national economy.

"They'll all die before they move."

During this second trip to Chile I make a surprising discovery. What I had first taken to be dejection over the low price of gold, is not that at all. It has to do with mercury. After more than 400 years the gold-processing trapiches of Chile are being shut down by government edict. The reason? Mercury! Trapiche amalgamation plants have contaminated the environment with so much mercury that it's now viewed as a national disgrace. The result: Public health agencies, and other social forces, have pressured federal legislators to take action. Throughout Chile mercury poisoning of land and water is all but banned. This development just happens to coincide with my visits.

In all this public and government outcry, no mention is made of air pollution. On any hot day a trapiche gold relave will exhaust toxic fumes of pure mercury into the atmosphere. The concentration is often measured in micrograms per cubic meter. I have brought a state-of-the-art "mercury sniffer" with me, that I rented from Arizona Instrument Company for $1,000 per month. A pump sucks in air across a gold gauze hooked to a resistivity meter. As I walk around a 300,000-ton relave in the Los Negritos District of Andacollo with owner Luis Donoso Garcia, we take readings of the invisible mercury vapor.

"Look at that!" Luis says. "On a hot day I don't want to be standing here."

I ask him about all those families living in houses

built on the relaves in nearby Andacollo. "Shouldn't they move to safer ground?"

"They'll all die before they move."

In the end, I have to shift gears. The relaves are simply not rich enough to merit the expense, political or financial, required to extract the gold. But there is something else to do here. The trapiche plants are shutting down or converting to grinding plants ahead of froth flotation. The really important work for me to get involved with around the trapiches is either in cleaning up the old relaves, or in removing mercury trapped in the slurries of working trapiches before it's discharged. Cleaning up means writing grant proposals for millions of dollars and moving a lot of dirt. But working with freshly-lost mercury is a different ballgame. The slurry contamination is in the form of flour mercury, particles so small their individual surface tension exceeds the energy required to effect coalescing into larger bodies of fluid quicksilver. But I have another means of motivating these microscopic specks as they leave the trapiche, before any mercury arrives at the relave. Success in this, I am assured, will permit the resumption of gold trapiche operation throughout Chile. There is plenty of work ahead. The main task is to bring the mercury content of a trapiche slurry from a customary several parts per million to zero.

A very attractive suggestion is made at the highest Chilean technical level that I do my investigation in Chile's principal research facility with Chilean funding. I am presently doing the preliminary research in my Los Angeles lab with no outside assistance.

With luck, I'll go back to Chile and continue the work there.

The Trapiche

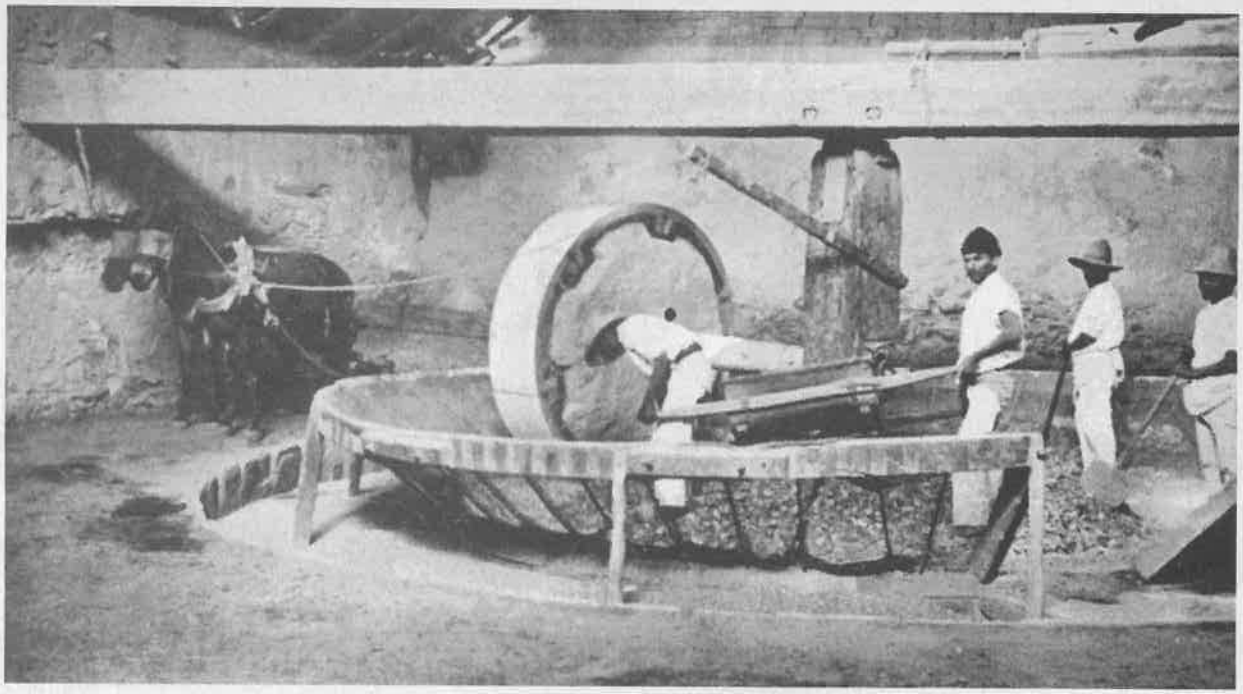
The maray *was one of the first processing tools used in the New World. The round stone is rocked back and forth to grind gold ore thrown beneath it. This unit, in the little city of Andacollo, Chile, is still seen in use and has been for hundreds of years.*

In Chile, the trapiche (tra-peach-ee) method of milling gold ore dates back more than 400 years (1). The first trapiche, also known as a Chilean mill, is a stone wheel weighing two or three tons(2) rotating on an axle. The stone wheel, powered by mules, rolls in a circle over crushed rock, grinding it to a powder. Gold particles break out of the rock during the process. The 19th century working trapiche shown in Photo 1, is a direct descendant of the 16th century apparatus used in Chile, Peru, and Mexico to grind gold ore.

An early improvement to the trapiche is the addition of a second wheel opposite the center post. Water poured in during the grinding makes a thin mud. The early wheels were probably used in the gold fields shortly after the 1570's, simply to grind ore. The mud is flushed from the mill and agitated in water. The gold settles out, and the pulverized rock that's left is washed away. The massive stone wheels used in these early mills can be seen abandoned in many parts of Chile.

Very Early History

The idea of using a carved rock wheel to grind ore was not born in the Americas. Long before the Spaniards arrived in Chile, the rotating stone to grind ore was widely employed in Europe. According to Agricola (3), writing



A 19th-century single-wheel, working Chilean mill. This trapiche has six replacement iron shoes on its grinding rim. The wheel hub is cast concrete. Note the blind-folded mules standing hitched to the drag-pole. Workers are unloading a hand-barrow of ore on the grinding floor.

in 1556, there had long been water-powered grinding mills in the Carpathian region of Germany, certainly before the discovery of the New World. These mills, shown as drawings in Agricola's text, had hard-wood toothed-gear drives with wrought-iron axles connected to grinding stones.

Perhaps some of this knowledge crossed the Atlantic with the early Spaniards. A letter dated July 25, 1511, from King Ferdinand VII to his colonists in the New World says, "Get gold, humanely if you can, but at all hazards get gold."(1)

Another early and very simple Chilean ore grinder is the maray. It dates from the first Spanish efforts to liberate gold from its vein rock after about 1570. The maray is a round boulder about two feet in diameter with two holes in the top. Wooden pegs driven into the holes are fastened to a long wooden pole. The boulder is set in a stone depression with ore. Men sit on either end of the pole and rock back and forth see-saw fashion, grinding the ore to a powder. Several of these primitive devices can still be seen in Andacollo, a small city north of central Chile, where they are used occasionally to grind high-grade gold ore.

In 1557, Bartolome Medina introduced the practice of mercury amalgamation into Mexico. From there it spread south (4), and the use of this liquid metal to capture Chilean gold came into widespread use.

The Modern Trapiche

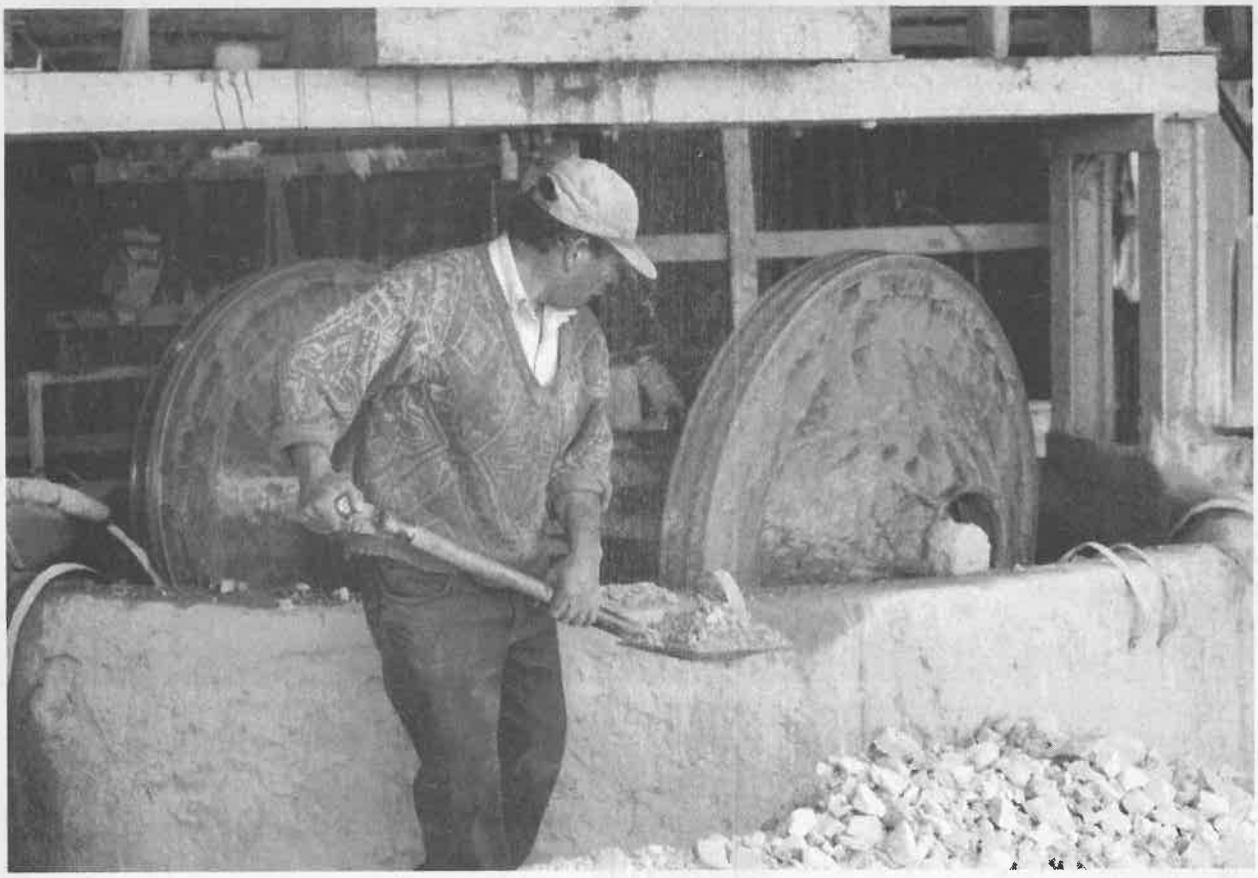
The Chilean trapiche evolved, probably sometime in the early 1700's, into a faster-moving machine with iron tires doing the grinding. The metal bands were mounted on hollow wooden cylinders. These were filled with heavy rock to give them weight. Thick metal tires over seven feet in diameter(5) and two feet wide used in the early years were worn down by as much as 15 pounds of iron per ton of ore ground.

The modern two-wheel trapiche swings on an axle powered by a 10 or 15 HP electric motor. The mechanism rotates at 40-60 rpm, while the wheels ride free on their steel track. The thick, work-hardened steel tire is six or more inches wide and is held in place by wooden wedges driven between it and the five-foot diameter wheel. Manganese steel may also serve as the stationary working surface in the bowl base. After a few months of non-stop grinding hard silicate ores to as fine as 150-mesh (6), wear on the thick ring and the wheel rim require replacement of these metal parts.

Installations with ten or more trapiches currently operate in Chile. Ore hauled in by truck is usually dropped or hand-fed into a jaw crusher. From there, the minus-two-inch material goes by wheelbarrow to stockpiles between each two trapiches. This crushed ore is shoveled over the lip of each bowl at the rate of 600-800 lbs per hour, about ten tons per 24-hour day.

One-man operations are not unusual in single-trapiche mills. All operating installations are labor intensive. The wage of a laborer, working 12-hour days, is about $200 per month.

Grinding takes place between the rotating steel rim and the base ring



The modern trapiche *with its long axle driven by an electric motor, has two freely-rotating grinding wheels which ride on short axles. The straps hanging over the lip of the basin hold the amalgamation plates submerged in the slurry. The edge of the wheel does all of the grinding. The feed method shown is typical.*

track. As the wheel rotates on its short axle, and spins around the bowl on its long axle, fines are generated beneath it. The center of the wheel rim is limited to crushing ore as it rolls around. But the inner and outer rim surfaces also rub and slide on the base ring. As they go around, they effectively "smear" the rock beneath the rim in addition to crushing it. The wheel sides are designed to agitate the slurry, without splashing, so that fine particles remain suspended and coarse material settles to the track.

Amalgamation in the Trapiche

Half-a-dozen 12 by 20-inch copper amalgamation plates, coated with mercury on the side facing the wheels, hang over the inside lip of the bowl, submerged in the slurry. Gold liberated, by grinding and suspended in the slurry by agitation, is captured in the mercury film by amalgamation. Every few hours the operator removes and cleanes the plates one at a time. During clean-up the plate is rubbed forcefully with a hard rubber block. This pushes the amalgam off one end into a bowl. The plate is then sprinkled with fresh mercury, smoothed with a soft sponge, and replaced in the trapiche.

Surprisingly, all of these manual operations are almost identical throughout the country.

During the grinding stage, sulfides in the ore such as pyrite or arsenopyrite can poison portions of the amalgam plate. When this occurs, fresh mercury may not readily adhere to the surface in those spots even after cleaning. Grease and oil from around the mine can also coat mercury and interfere with amalgamation. To combat plate poisoning a mild ammonia liquid is often blended into the plate after cleanup by rubbing briskly with the fingers. This reagent, added from a plastic squeeze bottle, is often simply the urine of the operator.

Gold encapsulated in un-ground particles will not be attracted to the mercury. Gold occurring in sulfide minerals such as pyrite, arsenopyrite, or galena, will also generally remain with the host particle in the slurry and be discharged to waste. This is lost gold. Mercury leaves the trapiche loosely-attached to fine rock particles, and as flour mercury. This discharge, along with the lost gold, ends up in the relaves (re-lav-ez), the stacked tailings.

Years of work with a particular ore has taught the operator how many hours are required for the best amalgamation. When this optimum point is reached, the trapiche slurry is released through a gate. A series of amalgamation plates may line the discharge launder to capture additional values.

Gold Recovery

The amalgam scraped from the plates is squeezed in a wet chamois or fine-woven cloth. Only mercury passes through the fabric. A double Kleenex layer may serve the same purpose. Ultimately, a soft, silvery ball remains in the fabric. This is finger-kneaded in the palm of one hand or in the bowl and tightly squeezed in the fabric to produce a hard ball. The result — an amalgam ball that contains about 30 percent gold and 70 percent mercury. All the clean-up and gold-recovery operations I observed in Chile were done by bare-handed men in almost constant contact with liquid mercury.

The amalgam ball may be retorted to recover both metals separately. A common practice in Chile is to burn the mercury off in a two-inch pipe fired with butane. Mill hands stand back from the invisible, toxic vapors. The gold is then melted and cast into a small, rough ingot for marketing.

Other and Current Uses

I find it most curious that, to my knowledge, there is not a single trapiche in the entire U.S. Of course, using mercury for amalgamation is now against the law in all fifty states. But Richards(7) describes the use of trapiches here in the early 1900s, 36 of them operating as grinding units in one Utah plant, and others as far east as North Carolina.

Looking at all gold recovery systems in the world, Taggart(8) had this to say about the trapiche in the first half of the 1900s: "Upkeep was low and the machine, essentially foolproof. It is adapted to inside amalgamation and is still used—and wisely—for some small gold mills."

For grinding alone, without amalgamation, Rickard(9) said the Chilean mill produced a product 80 percent finer than 200-mesh in sizable installations. He observed that in the early 1900s dozens of Chilean mills were kept in operation alongside Krupp ball mills and similar grinding units in Mexico.

The Trapiche Heritage

The little city of Andacollo mentioned previously, has been, for centuries, one of Chile's major sources of gold wealth. Trapiche relaves to forty feet in height dominate the city. Many homes are built on massive amalgamation tailings. Old trapiches, both operating and abandoned, can be seen around the city borders. From senior government officials in La Serena, the capital of the region, I learn that there are ten deaths annually in Andacollo alone due to mercury poisoning.

The economic benefits from gold, in the millions of ounces, recovered by trapiche amalgamation in Chile are now being partially, and painfully, offset by the recognition of environmental damage. The U.S. embargo on Chilean swordfish meat is a case in point. These salt water fish are contaminated with mercury from rivers draining the western slope of the Andes. This run-off flows through the trapiche relave regions, and empties into the Pacific along Chile's 3,000 miles of coastline where it enters the aquatic food chain.

These and other serious environmental consequences could seal the fate of the amalgamation trapiche, as it is known today in Chile.

The amalgam ball from a Chilean trapiche clean-up. The product contains one ounce of gold. It is about 30 percent gold and 70 percent mercury.

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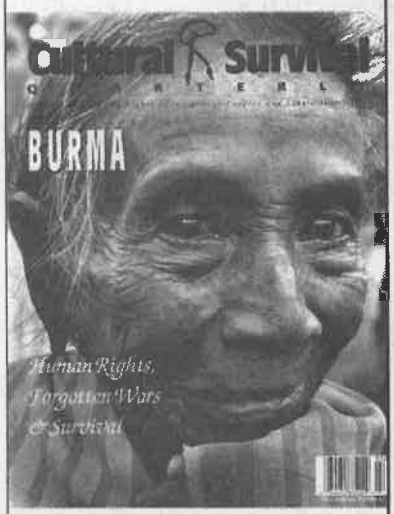

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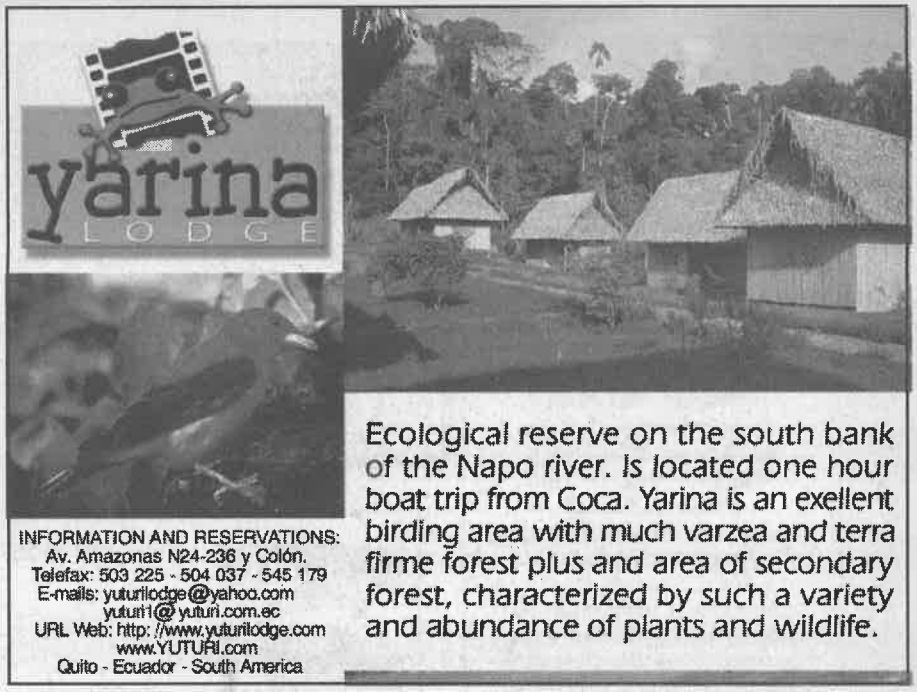

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NEWS SHORTS

MOUNTING PROBLEM

It's a mystery, but the sad truth is that if George, a 3-foot long, 200lb Galapagos tortoise cannot rise to the occasion, his species faces extinction.

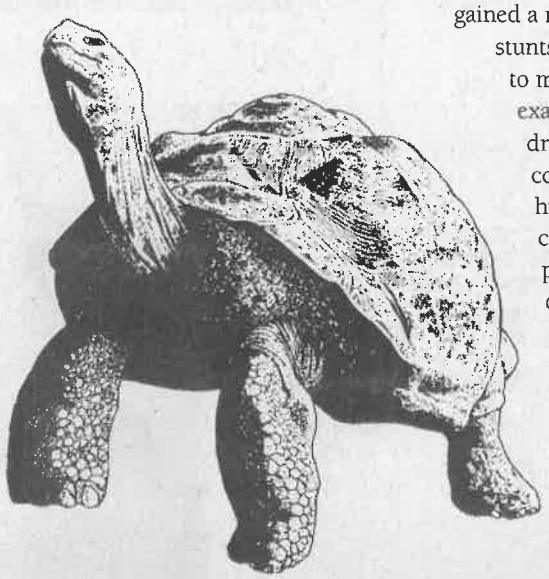
Known as Lonesome George to the many thousands of tourists who visit the Galapagos Islands each year, George poses an ongoing quandary to scientists at the Charles Darwin Research station on Santa Cruz island. For 20 years researchers have been successfully breeding giant tortoises. But not George. "We don't know what to do," says Solanda Rea "George just runs out of steam when trying to copulate." Clearly George has a problem. Tortoise researchers know that the sex drive of a lustful male tortoise is so strong that at times he will try to mate with a large rock. In most cases this wouldn't be serious however Lonesome George is the last known member of his sub-species *geochelone elephantophus abingdoni*. If George, one of just 11 types of rare tortoise, dies without an heir, his kind will be no more.

In desperation, frustrated researchers have offered $10,000 reward to anyone who can find a suitable mate for Lonesome George. This may not be easy. At the moment, two females belonging to a close sub-species share his enclosure. George just isn't interested. Researchers speculate he may require a female of his own sub-species. Alas, there aren't any. If George can't come to appreciate the charms of a reasonably close sub-species in the next 120 years or so, it's bye-bye sub-species.

It goes without saying that whoever introduces Lonesome George to a sexually appetizing partner is going to make front page news around the world and pick up a cool 10 g's to boot. It's probable that right now there are hundreds, possibly thousands, scouring nearby islands for just such a shelled slut.

Members if you are thinking of joining the search for a siren tortoise, be aware that during the mating season the male utters a horse roar or bellowing, which can be heard over a distance of a hundred meters and more. Now where there a bellow, there's a way. Clearly the male tortoise wouldn't be bellowing if there wasn't something close at hand to bellow about. It's risky, but if you can find what's causing the male tortoise to bellow and get it away from him with out injury, you might have what George needs to perform. Of course you might just have a large rock. Just an idea.

If you do win the $10,000 for hooking lonesome George up, we'd appreciate it if you'd mention the SAE for giving you the idea.



LADY'S NIGHT

Think New York is dangerous? Well how about Bogota, Colombia, which last year with approximately the same population racked up 2500 murders—4 times as many as the Big Apple.

So whose killing who in Bogota? Maybe it's men killing men, or men killing women, but probably not woman killing anybody or hardly anybody. Anyway Bogota's mayor Antanas Mockus thinks he has the answer to the city's runaway crime spree: Ban all men from the city streets at night.

Not everybody applauds the mayor's novel crime fighting scheme. Mockus's assurances, "that there is something about women that makes them more peaceful," is not a view universally shared by Colombia's law enforcement community. Nonetheless, Mockus's proposal—currently being studied by a team of lawyers—may well be tested. It's increasingly likely that a one-night curfew will take place where all men in this city of 7 million will be ordered off the street.

On the other hand, there is opposition. Antanas Mockus has gained a reputation for his wild stunts. He has been known to moon angry crowds for example and once dressed up in a carrot costume. He married his current wife atop a circus elephant, prompting his detractors to label his crime fighting plan as yet another of his circus antics.

El Tiempo, Colombia's leading newspaper, recently conducted a

tongue-in-cheek telephone survey. Respondents were asked: Will banning men from Bogota's streets lower crime? Many thought it wouldn't; others thought it might. One woman thought it might encourage men to cook.

SURPRISE PACKAGE

Two hundred and fifty tarantulas and twenty scorpions found in a box at Bogota's El Dorado International Airport are doing quite nicely after being unceremoniously dumped in a garbage can. Reports of the unusual discovery fail to mention who found the creatures, or more importantly how he/she reacted upon opening a huge carton of poisonous creatures. The news story does however quote Jorge Hernandez, a wildlife expert, who said that the beasties showed unmistakable signs of stress and dehydration. This is not surprising, he noted, since arachnids are found in tropical forests and only rarely in airport refuse receptacles. Still, he expected the critters to recover from their ordeal.

Airport official speculate the arachnids (yes a scorpion is an arachnid, also) ended up in the trash when a smuggler lost his nerve and chucked the lot. The tarantulas with hairy bodies roughly the size of a golf ball and the scorpions had been packed in separate boxes and placed in a larger box. It looks as though they were headed for Japan, said Hernandez, a country where collectors willingly pay huge amounts for exotic creatures.

Both the tarantulas and scorpions are currently recouping in a temperature controlled room at the Technical Administrative Environment Department in Bogota. For several weeks now, they have been dining on crickets and worms and will be returned to their natural environment in the jungle shortly.

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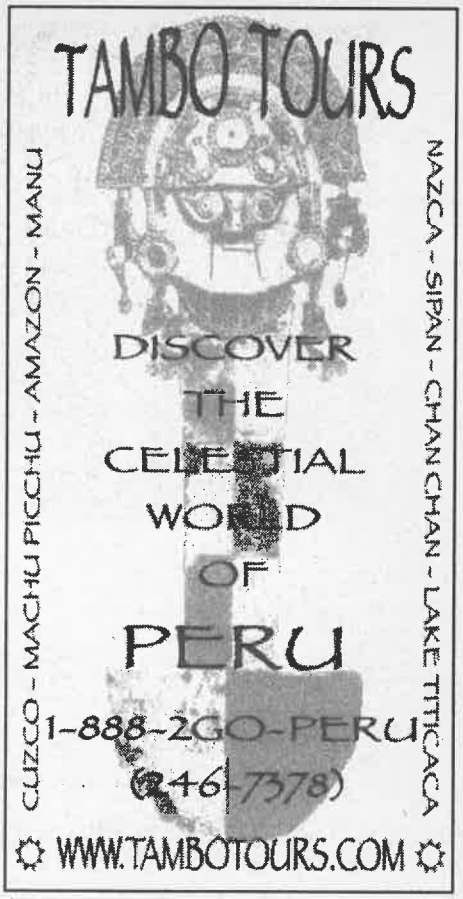
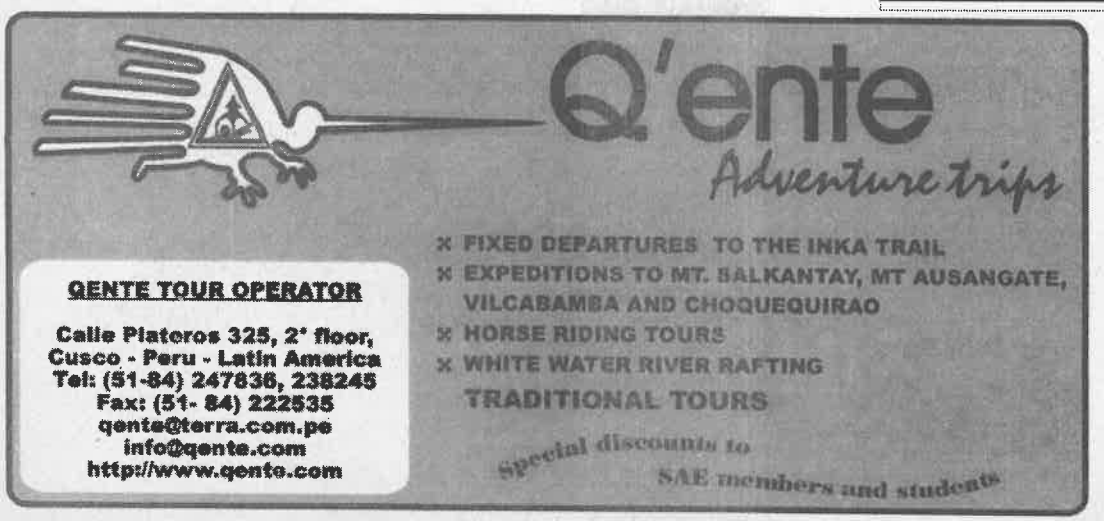




The A, B, C's of Hepatitis for the Traveler

By Christine Ross and Dr. Andrew Schechtman

Q: What is viral hepatitis and do I need to worry about it?

A: The hepatitis viruses are viruses that attack the liver. There are many different varieties but hepatitis A, B, and C are the ones of most importance for the South American traveler. These diseases are highly endemic (high rates of infection) in South America. The illnesses caused by these hepatitis viruses can range from being totally undetected to causing liver failure and death. Both hepatitis A and B infection can be easily prevented in travelers by getting the recommended vaccinations and taking appropriate precautions while traveling.

Q: How do people catch hepatitis A?

A: Hepatitis A is transmitted through the fecal-oral pathway, which unfortunately, is just as unappetizing as it sounds. The virus is found in large amounts in human feces, which in unsanitary conditions finds it's way into food or water often via a contaminated food handler.

Q: How do I avoid getting hepatitis A?

A: Avoid hepatitis A the same way you avoid any illness spread by contaminated food and drink. Drink only bottled beverages or those purified with iodine or by boiling. Most water filters do not exclude hepatitis A virus (it is just too small). Contaminated ice can transmit infection (even if in an alcoholic beverage). Don't eat raw shellfish, unpeeled fruit, or uncooked vegetables or salads. Take extreme caution when eating food or drink from street vendors. In addition to choosing your food and drink wisely, all travelers should be vaccinated against hepatitis A before departure.

Q: Tell me more about the hepatitis A vaccine.

A: The two dose series of hepatitis A vaccine produces immunity in 98% of those who receive it. It consists of a killed virus so there is absolutely no chance of catching hepatitis from the vaccine itself. The vaccine is appropriate for anyone over two years old and is given as a two dose series with the second dose given six months after the first. Most people have a good level of immunity within 4 weeks of the first injection. Therefore, try to get the first hepatitis A vaccine at least four weeks before you start your travel. Immunity is thought to last for at least twenty years and booster shots are not required.

Q: I just found out I'm leaving in a few days. Is the hepatitis A vaccine still worth getting?

A: Yes. For protection against hepatitis A until the vaccine kicks in (about four weeks), you should also receive an injection of immune globulin (also known as gamma globulin). Immune globulin consists of pooled antibodies from donated plasma. The antibodies are filtered and treated, thoroughly enough so that there have been no known cases of disease transmission in those receiving immune globulin. Nevertheless, it is expensive and sometimes in short supply. The best bet is to avoid the need for immune globulin by getting your first hepatitis A vaccine at least 4 weeks before you leave.

Q: How would I know if I caught hepatitis A?

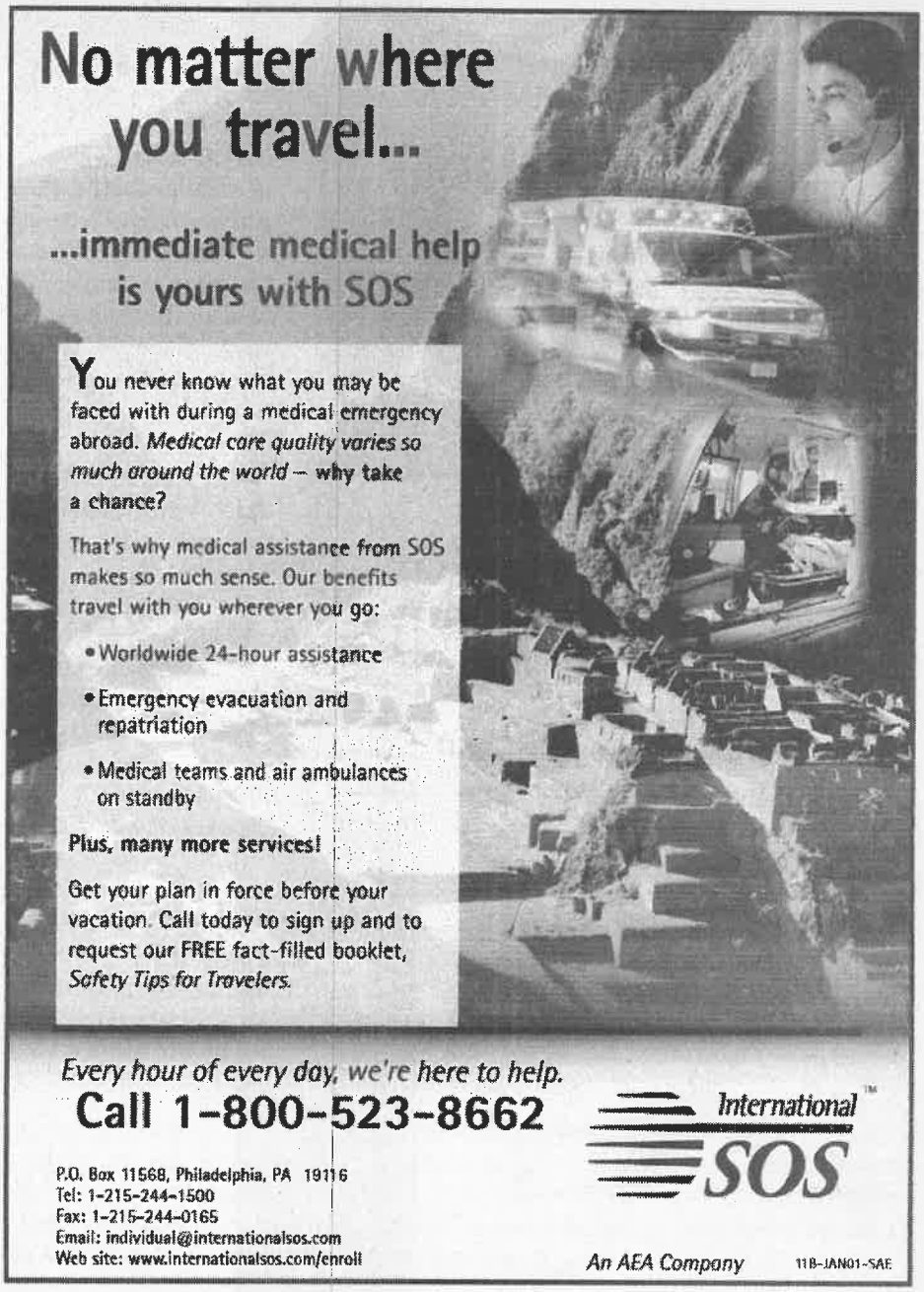
A: Many people infected with hepatitis A virus never know it. In those who do get sick, illness usually begins about four weeks after infection with fever, tiredness, decreased appetite, nausea, and abdominal discomfort. Yellowing of the skin and eyes (jaundice) and dark urine are also common. There is no treatment for hepatitis A but those suffering from it should rest, eat a healthy diet, and avoid alcohol to hasten their recovery and prevent complications. Most people recover fully within two months.

Q: Am I at risk for catching Hepatitis B while traveling?

A: Hepatitis B is a highly contagious virus that, luckily, is transmitted in only a few ways. Travelers can only get hepatitis B in two ways. The first is by being exposed to contaminated needles or blood products, such as from tattoo needles, in unsanitary health facilities, or by receiving an inadequately screened blood transfusion. The only other way to catch hepatitis B is by having unprotected sex with an infected partner. To prevent sexual transmission, pick your new partners wisely and, if in doubt, always use a condom.

Q: What can be done to reduce my risks of catching Hepatitis B?

A: In addition to following the above precautions, there is an effective vaccine against the hepatitis B virus. The vaccine is specifically recommended for medical, dental, or lab workers and for travelers who anticipate high-risk sexual contacts. Also, those planning to take up residence or to travel for more than six months abroad should be vaccinated. The hepatitis B vaccine consists of a three dose series, with the second and third shots given one and six months after the first, respectively. About nine out of ten people are immune after completing the series.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Q: What about hepatitis C?

A: Hepatitis C is spread in the same ways as hepatitis B. Unfortunately, there is no vaccine and preventing infection depends on avoiding exposure through taking appropriate precautions.

Q: What happens if I get infected with Hepatitis B or C?

A: The initial stage of illness is exactly like that described above with hepatitis A. Like with hepatitis A, there is no specific treatment. Unfortunately, unlike with hepatitis A, many of those infected with hepatitis B or C will have an ongoing, smoldering infection in their liver long after the signs of the illness have resolved. This can sometimes lead to severe liver problems down the road. If you think you may have been exposed to hepatitis B or C during your

travels, you may want to see your doctor to be tested. Treatment for the smoldering forms of hepatitis B and C is available but may not provide a cure. The best bet is to prevent these infections by vaccination and taking appropriate precautions.

About the Authors

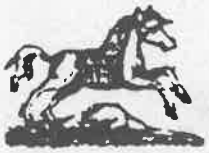
DR. ANDREW SCHECHTMAN is a family physician with a Diploma in Clinical Tropical Medicine and Traveler's Health from the Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. He is currently on staff at the Ochsner Clinic in New Orleans, Louisiana. He has worked overseas with Doctors without Borders in Guatemala and Uganda.

CHRISTINE ROSS is a third-year medical student at the Louisiana State University School of Medicine in New Orleans. She holds a Master's degree in Public Health and Tropical Medicine from Tulane University. She has served with the Peace Corps in Sierra Leone and has worked with Doctors without Borders in Kenya and Uganda.

Disclaimer : These recommendations are general and may not apply to every reader. Please consult your doctor for recommendations specific to your travel plans.

E-mail medical questions to Dr. Schechtman at aschechtman@pol.net

Although questions cannot be answered personally, a selection will be answered and published in future issues of the South American Explorer.



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La Tola

Founded in 1974 by the Salesian Order, La Tola provides Quito's homeless with a place to sleep, basic food and medical attention. The shelter also offers social and religious programs for the growing numbers of poor who flock to the city in search of work.

For 12 years the SAE has provided support to La Tola through donations by generous members of money, food, clothing, tools and volunteer help.

While La Tola extends its care and services to adults, entire families, teen girls and street kids in need, the SAE has channeled its support to " Ninos de la Calle." This program is for some 50 homeless street boys who struggle to eke a precarious existence shining shoes and begging. These young children of the streets are being taught basic hygiene, reading and writing skills and given a chance to play with other children. What they need is smiles, attention and hope to break the cycle of poverty.

The SAE has recently been helping out with La Tola's carpentry project. Money donated by members is used to buy lumber and tools. A skilled carpenter teaches the boys to make beds, chairs and tables. With skills learned in the La Tola workshop more advanced boys are turning out high quality cigar humidors. These are sold throughout Quito. Humidors will soon be available to SAE members!

Already six of La Tola's street kids have completed their secondary education through financial help provided by members. But there's more to be done. A second group of six needs your support to get started.

The economic outlook in Ecuador is bleak. Inflation is rampant Although contributions to buy food for the street kids are up 40%, this doesn't buy what it used to. We need your help and the help of other organizations to continue the work.

We thank all those who've given their support to La Tola over the years. We also thank all those who've been volunteering at the shelter, teaching basic language skills, English and arithmetic. Still others have giving freely and generously of themselves by taking the boys on weekend trips to the mountains and coast. For these young kids who've grown up on the streets of Quito these outings are the adventure of a lifetime.

How can you help? Tax deductible donations can be made through the Ithaca clubhouse Also members coming to Ecuador are urged to bring used children's clothes, shoes in small sizes, toys or even just some toothbrushes and paste.

For further information please contact our Quito Office (Boz), Ithaca, or Diana Morris at dbmorris@pi.pro.ec.

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Children of the Sun

'Inti Wawakunaq Wasin' (IWW) is a small NGO in Cusco Peru. This is its Quechua name. In English it translates as, 'House of the Children of the Sun'.

What can I say about Inti Wawakunaq Wasin? How can I bring it to life and show you how it works and why it does what it does?

Inti is a Peruvian non-profit organization and a registered US charity, *Friends of the Children of the Sun*, with headquarters in Minnesota. The brainchild of two tourists who visited Cusco, the idea goes back to 1994 but took 5 long years of struggle to get going. In the end, a small group of inspired Peruvians kept it alive. In February, 2000, Inti was finally able to rent three rooms just a few minutes walk from the Plaza de Armas. Now street kids have a place to go, a place where they belong. There is a bathroom, some games, music, classes and once a day, a simple meal. The dream has moved a giant step closer to reality.

Inti's street kids are anywhere from 6 and 17 years old. All are homeless. Some have drug problems They walk the streets, beg and sleep in doorways, under stalls in the market or wherever they can escape the cold and wet.

Inti 's goals are many: to better the health of the children, improve nutrition, offer counseling, provide workshops, hold out real hope of something better.

I went to visit Inti Wawakunaq Wasin again last week. A little boy and girl around 7 or 8 immediately attached themselves to me, one to each arm. Swinging them round and playing with them I thought: Wow, these kids act just like kids. Why the surprise? They *were* kids! But the Children of the Sun are not typical. They haven't had much of a childhood. They're little adults struggling to survive on the cold, wet streets, living from day to day. Yes, that's right. They struggle. Of course, children suffer in our own countries, but on the streets of Cusco you see the reality of extreme poverty every day. And there is no system to help, no social welfare, no central or local government support.

These kids are on their own.

I've looked into the eyes of the children here who want to sell you postcards or sweets and I see a darkness and emptiness that strikes me deeply. My nephew, about the same age, talks and smiles and likes Teletubbies, toy trains and coloring and is loved by his father and mother. The nearest thing these kids get to hugs from Mom and Dad is when they huddle together in doorways at night.

They smile to get tourists to buy a postcard or a packet of sweets. Sometimes this smile turns to anger when they hear "No Gracias". Who can blame them? We are millionaires compared to them—in many, many ways

These children now have Inti Wawakunaq Wasin. I looked at the children playing, laughing, fighting, shouting — things children should do. And hey, smiling, too.

So that is what I know of Inti Wawakunaq Wasin, the Children of the Sun. This is an organization full of love, with people who tell the street children every day: "You are not forgotten." I will certainly being going back again and again. And now that you know a little about these children, perhaps you will visit them when you come to Cusco. I'm sure you will be made as welcome as I was by the smiles, hugs and kisses from the Children of the Sun.

Sarah Reeve
Carmen Weick

If you want to find out more about Inti Wawakunaq Wasin , please contact the Cusco clubhouse for further details.

CUSCO CLUB NEWS

It's been a long, slow, rainy summer. Everyone is looking forward to the sunny days and cold nights of winter. This is high season for the Cusco Clubhouse and, yes, we're gearing up to welcome member, old and new.

We're still busy updating and reorganizing trip reports, maps and files. It's going to take a while yet, so please be patient with us whilst we answer your queries.

Members, take note! The new regulations for the Inca Trail are taking effect. Gone are the days when you could just turn up in Cusco and get on the Inca Trail the next day. Travel companies are now scheduling departure dates days ahead. It may not be so easy in the future to join a group. Best book your trip in advance and of course now this has to be arranged through a licensed company. Of course, it's true that, in Peru, new regs don't always go into effect when they're supposed and are sometimes enforced erratically. Still, better safe than sorry.

Also, it appears that only 500 people a day will be allowed on the trail. This figure includes porters, guides, cooks etc. so the upshot is that only about 250 trekkers a day will get to go. More? The regulations require that entrance passes to get on the trail be purchased at least 20 days in advance. So, friends, contact the Cusco clubhouse in advance to find our what agencies your fellow members recommend and reserve your trip ASAP.

We look forward to meeting you all. Remember! You can always email us for help and advice in planning your trip. We are also always looking for volunteers in Cusco. If you have some time to spare and feel like helping us out for a while, just drop us a line and let us know.

Sarah Reeve

LIMA CLUB NEWS

The sun is out and life is large in Lima! The past few months in the city have been scorching hot, and many a traveler has entered the club sunkissed (or sunburned, as they case may be!).

The club itself has been hopping with good energy and new projects. One of the most exciting is the new Explorers Volunteer Resource Desk, which hosts an ever-growing collection of organizational contacts and job descriptions in Ecuador and Peru. Many thanks to Cecilie Wessel for her hard work and dedication in organizing this project!

Also in the works are plans for the Lima City Tour series, which will begin this June. Want to know more about history and unknown treasures in the City of Kings? Make plans to attend one of our weekly tours while in Lima! We thank Tilak for all of his hard work on this project! Also, coming along is the Peru Ruins packet, which will highlight lesser known ruins in Peru and a Disease and Vaccination bulletin, accessible on-line... so members can schedule shot days before visiting Peru! A super thanks to our new volunteers from Germany, Max and Anna, for their work.

There's more!! The Lima clubhouse is launching a SKY MILES DRIVE to collect frequent flyer miles so our dedicated managers can visit home one time per year. Please, if you have frequent flyer miles with American Airlines, Delta, or Continental (COPA) contact the clubhouse directly to make a donation. All donors will be duly honored on our webpage and in club news!

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT: Max and Madeline are the two kittens we just adopted from Amigos de Animales, the local equivalent of the Animal Humane Society. Staff and members dote over Max and Madeline as they zoom around the house in search of warm laps! The animals can also be seen bouncing around Tim Currie, former club manager and current volunteer, or is it Tim who is actually bouncing around them?

The presidential Campaign is now in full swing. The latest contenders appear to be Garcia (APRA candidate and past president from the1980's), Toledo (past candidate representing SOMOS PERU), and Lourdes (a woman who is running independently with the support of many Fujimori backers). Other than political graffiti and random parades, the pre-election activities seem to be rather peaceful. Keep checking our website for updates!

We send a warm Thank You to Bruno Bonierbale for all of his hard work and dedication to this club over the past year. He still drops by the Club every so often around lunchtime but we miss his daily spark of good energy!

Finally, many thanks to members who have brought handcarries to us from our Ithaca office! Your efforts keep this club alive!

Until July,
Tamara Houston
Manager

QUITO CLUB NEWS

Its been a crazy few months what with all the staff comings and goings, holidays and new arrivals, but we're hanging in and enjoying the heat and sunshine. The great weather has come at last.

So what's new? Well, first our assistant manager Alicia left the country for some post-thesis R and R in Europe. She was followed by long term volunteer Linette who also fancied a little *je ne sais quoi* and flew off to France. And then Simon decided he needed a quickie trip home to the UK to stock up on Marmite and fish and chips.... Who knows? Maybe they're planning to open the EEC (European Explorers Club, not to be confused with the famous Euro Toffs based in Brussels!!!).

Those of us left behind bravely held the fort, working long hours to create the great new Trip Report database. Listen up, Members! You can now type your trip report directly into the database. And what a database!!! It's searchable. It's true! Type in Vegetarian and Galapagos and Boat and ...well you know what you'll get? Every vegetarian boat owner in the Puerto Ayora.

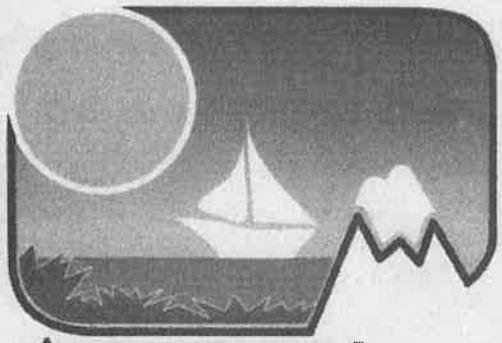
Still a BIG problem remains. This great new Trip Report Database will be in demand, by members wanting to type in their trip reports, and other members who want to search for vegetarian boat captains. Fights will break out. Tempers will flare. UNLESS....we can get some donations of laptop computers. Here is a magnificent opportunity for a generously inclined benefactor to earn our eternal gratitude.

Boz is seeking new recruits for the Nomads, the Quito Rugby Football club he started last year. Already the Nomads have played an Argentinean team and been north to play in the Colombian 7s too. If you play and are coming down remember to bring your boots – all welcome, ladies too!!

The club continues to support the La Tola boys shelter (more details in the La Tola report) and thanks everyone who kindly sent shoes, clothes, pens and such to help.

Hark! Hark! We will greet, meet, and bring in from the airport all those generous souls who handcarry in those much needed books & magazines from the States. yes, a FREE ride in from the airport!! Please! If you can help let us know in plenty of time.

See ya all here soon
Boz and the Crew



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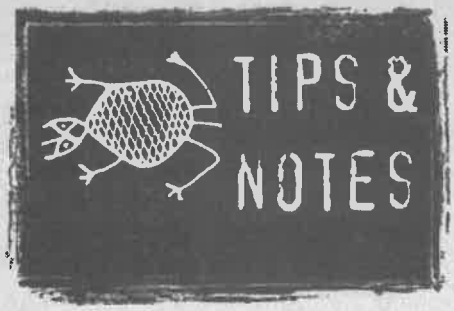

The 2002 Calendar? Sure it's a little early but why not? It just so happens we have the 2002 magical Machu Picchu Calendar in stock right now. Why? It's a long story. Still, the fact is you can snap up one, two, three, or more of this absolutely splendid calendar(the best yet), and when 2002 rolls around you'll be ready to bestow the right gift on your deserving pals and cronies.

Think this calendar might not be as beautiful as we claim? Order one now and check it out. You'll be ordering more later on.

Anyway, we're glad to have this calendar this far in advance since we were a bit late in touting the 2001 calendar. It won't happen again. Order now.

Patagonia—Flash Visit

Just last year the trip to Calafate from Buenos Aires meant flying to gloomy Rio Gallegos, then transferring to a bus for the one hundred and ninety mile ride over a bumpy backwoods road.

All that's changed. You can now get to El Calafate direct, thanks to a spanking new airport. Bypassing Rio Gallegos planes from Buenos Aires, fly into El Calafate for as little as $298 round trip not including taxes. Trips to Perito Moreno, Glacier, Fitz Roy, Cerrro Torre, and other sites in Argentina's mammoth Glacier National Park are within easy reach as well as trips across the border into Chile to visit Torres del Paine also known as the Jewel of the Crown.

Flights by Aerolinias Argentinas and Lineas Aerolineus Provadeus Argentinas put down in Trelew, famous for its Welsh heritage and proximity to the penguin rookeries and whale colonies near Puerto Madeyn and the Valdez Peninsula. For those going further south, there are connections to Ushuaia in Tierra del Fuego.

Personal Toilet

We aren't selling the Kant Wate (get it Kant Wate/can't wait?) portable personal toilet for commuters, truckers, outdoor sportsmen, and family travelers and countless other who have to go number one or number two or both. Why aren't we stocking such a useful item constructed of contoured plastic, with attachable plastic bag filled with sanitizing gelling powder designed for easy use, disposal and storage? Because each Kant Wate kits are only available online.

Want to know how you can get your Kant Wate kit with reusable cups molded to fit the male and female body for only $19.95 apiece? Call 1-800-386-5050 or check out: www.kantwate.com

World Arch Database

Sure, you'd like to be able to locate all the natural arches on your next trip, or track down arches by size, location, rock type, land ownership, so you can get the most out of a natural arch once you've found it. Well who wouldn't? Photographers will find the World Arch Database extremely useful because each arch is given a photographic rating. Geographers, and other scientists who study these natural phenomenon are certain to praise the site.

Do we recommend the World Arch Database? Well actually, no. The sad truth is that the database contains no South American arches at all—not even one. Does this mean there aren't any? No! There are natural arches all over S.A. In some places along the coast in Chile there are so many arches you feel like you're walking through the rib cage of a vast whale. So what gives? Alas, it's a newish database. In time, they're certain to remedy this grievous omission. In the meantime members are urged to help out. Supply information on natural arches to this website and you'll be credited with an arch "discovery" in the database. You'll also be credited for any photos you send in.

Aching to report an arch? Click on stonecanyons.com or call 1877-786-6296. Arch you glad we told you about it?

Odyssey Travel

First there was Judge Crater, then Jimmy Hoffa, now there's David Landes. What happened to David? We don't know. One day he was there, the next, gone. Did he call up to warn us? No. We heard nothing until members started phoning in with "What happened to David Landes? Why doesn't Odyssey Travel answer the phone etc." So we called ourselves 1-800-395-5955, and sure enough there wasn't any David Landes on the other end of the line. Just a recording of David and not all that informative either. At first there was a suggestion that whatever was the matter was temporary. In the next recording, whatever was wrong sounded decidedly more permanent. In the most recent recording... well... it doesn't look good. When you dial 1-800-395-5955 you get a recording that goes:

Ring ring ring ring ring ring! This is David Landes at Odyssey Travel. Effective immediately, I am suspending all activities of Odyssey Travel. I will try and finish up bookings that are in process, however. If you need a ticket for South/Central America please call Mena directly, 1-800-536-6362, and ask for John or Nelly.

So that's it. Now you know everything we know about Odyssey Travel and David Landes. If you find out more, call in.

In Vein

Skip over this item, and it could kill you.

We're talking about that killer DVT (Deep Venous Thrombosis). Without getting too technical here's what happens. Say you're flying to Quito, looking out the window and thinking about whether you'll have the beefsteak with vegetables or chicken with rice. Suddenly, with no warning, you are gripped in the vise of unbearable pain.

Unbeknownst to you a hideous clot has been forming just below your knee. It's blocking life-sustaining blood from circulating freely throughout you're system, bringing nutrients to the cells, absorbing carbon dioxide, killing germs and doing all the things you learned about in biology class. Worse. If that big clot breaks off it can travel through the blood stream and lodge in the brain, lungs, heart or other area and cause severe damage. When that happens there's a good chance you'll be dead before drinks are served, an embarrassment to the airline, a nightmare to the family in the adjoining seats. Even worse it's your fault because you could have avoided DVT and been able to get off the plane by yourself.

DVT is also known as the couch potato's ailment. So do yourself a favor. On long trips here's what you should do: find a place to lie down and elevate your legs five to six inches above your head. If you just happen to have an anticoagulant with you, pop it now. Even better if you can get your hands on an elastic stocking, pull it on making sure the top of the stocking is about 2 inches below the knee or groin. If you can't do any of the above, get up and wander about the cabin.

Diving Brazil

Member Thomas Kozo passes on the following information:

" Trying to set up a dive/travel trip in Brazil? I was felicitously referred to Isabell Cortes (isabel @megaworld.cc) who helped me set up a trip using the Brazilian airpass that allowed me to dive in Recife and Fernando de Noronha and visit Salvador as well. All this was done very efficiently and for a very reasonable price. I highly recommend them to travelers to Brazil as well as scuba divers.

Oils well that ends well

When the oil tanker *Jessica* ran aground and started leaking fuel oil off San Cristobal island in the Galapagos, it looked like another Exxon Valdez disaster. The oil slick that developed, soon spread over nearly 1,000 square miles of ocean water. But in the end, the large scale devastation that, at the time, seemed likely did not occur. Not only did the *Jessica* carry much less oil than the Exxon Valdez, but circumstances favored a more fortunate outcome— fully one third of the oil was recovered and much of the rest quickly thinned out and evaporated in the tropical sun.

Nonetheless, scientists and others called in, at considerable cost, say that constant monitoring over three to four years will be necessary to determine the full extent of any long-term harm to the area and the animals that live there.

Yuturi
JUNGLE
ADVENTURE
Biological reserve located after a five hour boat trip from Coca in the Napo river. Yuturi is surrounded by an impressive primary terra firme forest, with over 400 species of birds.
Yuturi is considered as one of the major birdwatching sites of the ecuadorian jungle.
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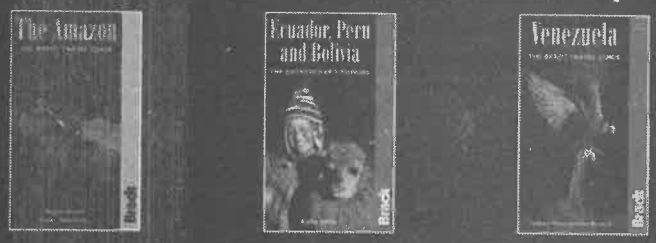

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by Daniel Buck

SAMUEL

Our guest columnist is Samuel, no last name, an entrepreneurial English shepherd. In the late 1800s, he and nine companions drove an immense flock of sheep, an ocean of sheep, through Argentine Patagonia, from the banks of the Río Negro south to Puerto San Julián on the coast of Santa Cruz, a distance of roughly 1,000 miles. Samuel's undulating, wooly army, pittering over the Patagonian steppes, must have been quite a sight. For the animals themselves it was a travail. They began 9,900 strong, but more than 4,100 fell along the way, mainly from lack of water. Even so, he turned a profit and banked 700 dollars, a tidy sum in those days.

Samuel lived off the land, hunting guanaco, rhea, wild horse and cow, and even a fat mule, which he declared "tasted very well." It goes without saying that he consumed a fair amount of mutton.

Several months after delivering his charges to Puerto San Julian, Samuel had crossed over to Punta Arenas, in Magellanic Chile, where he had taken up a new post at a sheep estancia owned by "Messrs Hamilton & Saunders," undoubtedly John Hamilton and William and Thomas Saunders, who had come to Patagonia in 1885 from the Falkland Islands. They also owned properties in Santa Cruz, near Río Gallegos. (Michael Mainwaring mentions Hamilton and the Saunders brothers in *From the Falklands to Patagonia*, his 1983 book on the early days of sheep raising in southern Argentina.)

From Punta Arenas, Samuel posted a letter to his brother and sister, who were presumably in England, recounting his experiences. His letter is reprinted below. Samuel's command of his native tongue was wobbly and his punctuation, careless. With the exception of a few bracketed annotations, chiefly on geographic terms, the letter is reproduced as Samuel wrote it.

Chile
Casa de la Puertado,
10th January 1891

Dear Brother & Sister,

You would learn from the letter that I sent to John that I had arrived at Sandy Point [Punta Arenas, Chile] all right. I said in my last letter that I would be able to tell you something of wild and hard life after the journey. Well, to begin with – On the evening of 17th December, 1889 as the sun was setting we enter on the Track betwixt Rio Negro [the river in the Argentine province of the same name] and Valehate [Valcheta], that is an Indian Settlement. The distance from Rio Negro to Valehate is 96 miles. We halted at 10 a.m. on the 18th, resumed the march at 4 p.m. when it got a little cooler as the days was very hot. Halted at 10 at night. Started again at 2 in the morning of the 19th – halted at 9 a.m., every man with a tired horse. We had then travelled 27 miles and arrived at a valley called Igialieha [Gualicho], which means Devil's Valley. There was 9 of us with the sheep, which were 9900, they were divided in 3 flocks of 3300 each. I was in charge of the middle flock – I had 2 Indians to help me.

When we started from Rio Negro we each provided outselves with 4 bottles of water, which was intended rations for 1 day as the cart that carried the water was to reach us on the evening of the 18th. Well you can guess how we looked at each other on the 19th, when the sun was scorching and our horses too tired to carry us back to the river, when every man felt as if he could drink a bucket full of water. It so happened a man with a cart, who had been trading with the Indians, came along and had brought a good supply of water for himself and his men so they gave us a little of theirs. Our own cart arrived at us in the afternoon but we had to encamp in the valley until the afternoon of the 20th when we were supplied with fresh horses. We got through the valley on the 21st.

On the 22nd we travelled 5 hours but could not travel any further with our horses because they were tired. Some of the horses were lying down and rolling every 100 yards with pangs of thirst. On the evening of the 22nd we got a fresh supply of horses and in the morning of the 23rd, travelling slowly as the sheep were very weak, we resumed the march after siesta. When I removed the sheep to march, after the sun went down a little, I found a lot had died of thirst. On the 24th travelled slowly in the morning and afternoon. In the evening got another supply of horses then travelled all night.

At daybreak on the 25th we arrived at the Spanish Laguna Verde which means Green Lake. There I had a splendid Christmas breakfast of saltish water, then on the 26th in the morning I was helping with the last lot of dying sheep. Got then to within 1 mile of water before siesta and could not get them further. In the

afternoon resumed the task of getting them to water. The loss in that was pretty heavy for of 600, we only had 200 in the afternoon. In the last 2 days of travel towards the laguna Verda we were leaving sheep all along the track. In those 7 days were our greatest hardships. We never had more than 4 bottles of water for 24 hours and our food was mutton alone without salt and never more than half cooked. 2 horses went mad when they tasted the water other 2 died on the Track another was so far gone that he lay till the birds picked all his head, but he lived afterwards. I was fortunate not to lose any in that march. It was rather pitiful to see the sheep the last two days of that long march as they were completely tired and dying of thirst.

I had to ride to Rio Negro again on the 27th along with another of the Company to look for more workmen as the men we had were only engaged for that march. On my second crossing the Travesa I called to see the Devil's Den which is situated on the North West side of a salt lake [Salina del Gualicho] at the South side of this valley. The description of his den. His flagstaff was about 1 feet high his banner a pure red. I think he must be fond of smoking as there was a good supply of Tobacco, Matches and Cigarette paper &ce. I spent the first of 1890 among the Indian huts on the Island of Chocla Choel [Choele Choel, an island in the Río Negro, northwest of Viedma]. Had my New Year supper in the Hotel de Gregoria in the town of Chocla Choel. We had a fine supper, 4 courses and a desert of cake. 1st course – Plate of Soup. 2nd – Boiled Beef. 3rd – Roast of Guanaco Meat. 4th – Roast Horse Beef. So you generally get a good feed once a year.

The Indians here are very superstitious. There have been a lot of men lost in that long Travesa from Rio Negro to Valehate through horses tiring or getting sick or such like accidents and the Indians are of opinion that a Passer who will not give a present to Igualicha, that he takes themself instead, so they supply him with Tobacco &c in their passing to and from Rio Negro from Valehate to Chubut. That is the second Settlement which is a Welsh Agriculture Colony. We were not so badly off. We had 2 long marches with the animals without water, first one 74 miles from an Encampment called la Arroy Verda [Arroyo Verde, in southeastern Río Negro, near the border with Chubut], the second 60 miles from an Encampment called Piechalon [possibly Pichalao, near Cerro Pichalao] to Chubut. In both of these marches we found small springs that had sufficient water for ourselves and the horses we had in saddle and the weather being a little colder, the loss in the sheep was not so great.

The country is very barren and rocky from Rio Negro to Chubut. There are plenty of Guancos, Ostrich, Wild Horses and Cows but we could not run them among the rocks – from Chubut south the country is better. We had several fat cows 1 fat Colt and plenty of Ostrich, Guanaco and 8 or 9 Pumas or Lion as they are called here. A fat Ostrich is very sweet eating, Guanaco meat is almost like cow meat. Pumas are generally fat and are to my taste very sweet eating. I had a good feed off a fat Mule that was 7 or 8 years old – it tasted very well. We left Chubut on the 15th of May and arrived in Sanjulian [Puerto San Julián, on the coast of the Santa Cruz province] on the 21st of August. We passed the winter on the Track marching, sleeping in the shelter of a bush when we could find them. The cold was not so bad as the thirst, although I found no comfort in either.

The distance from Chubut to Sanjulian is about 400 miles. Our total loss of sheep is 42 per cent. I don't know the exact loss of horses and mares. I only lost 2 mares and 1 colt. I have left my sheep with one of the Partners at Sanjulian on condition he takes the wool and I get the Increase, but I would rather sell all and take a troop of riding horses to a Colony in the Andates [Andes] called Corcabado [Corcovado, a valley in western Chubut, south of Trevelin] to see the hand there so that I might choose the best place to settle as I believe. Corcobado is a nice place. I don't intend to lose in my trading. My sheep cost me 1 dollar and 3 Cents and I am now offering them for sale at 11 shillings. I don't sell in Argentina money nor in Chile moneybecause the Exchange is so high. The Soverign here at present is worth 20 Argentine Dollars. I have exchanged it at

that rate. I have sold my worst horse at 4 pounds, my next worst at £8. I am now offering another for £11. I took care to sell the oldest and worst first. The 2 I have sold and the 1 I now offer for sale cost over 67 Argentine Dollars. The Mares and Colts cost 15 Dollars which I lost. I think I will leave you to reckon up now as I know you are a better hand at it than I am.

Now as regards to my present situation and state. My present situation is a new establishment of Messrs. Saunders & Hamilton, who are part Owners in the animals we brought from Rio Negro. I am at present looking after a lot of Rams that had to be kept on the land to hold it. I have about 7 hours work in the day with the exception of an odd day now and again. I work very hard, cooking big dishes for myself and then eating them. I have spent a lot of my time hunting this last month. It has been a paying amusement as it is breeding season with Guanacos. The skins of young ones are worth 19 shillings the Mantle, it takes 13 for a Mantle. I have caught 35 young Ganacos. My wages are £6 a month. I am all alone at present but I have got a neighbor close by. He is only 16 miles from me. They are going to take the Rams away and send me a flock of sheep likewise a man to help me to look after them. I think I am better off here than I could be a home, when I consider my wages and interests of my sheep and 4 breeding mares. I have 1 horse Colt ready for taming and 2 Mares 5 Riding Horses and 700 Dollars at 6 per Cent Interest, I think I will have to finish. Hoping you are all well as this leaves me at present.

Your Affectionate Brother Samuel

My Address
c/o John Hamilton Esq.,
Sandy Point, Straits of Magellan
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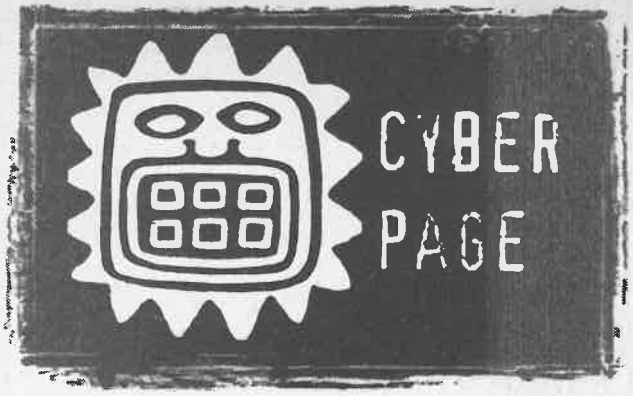

Kelly and Enric Motorcycle Trip

www.kellyenric.com

Five maybe ten years ago if you were driving to South American you'd turn to the SAE as the best and almost only source of up-to-date reliable information.

Times are changing.

As we speak the adventuresome Kelly and Enric are motorcycling North on an epic 4 month trip through South America. Did this intrepid couple come to South American Explorers for sage counsel before setting out on their hazardous odyssey? Do they look to us now as the exclusive fount of priceless information on road conditions, bandit sightings, foul weather, rabid canines, coups and revolutions, local vipers etc? Do they depend on us for instant bulletins and advisories? Alas no.

The truth is we wouldn't even know the whereabouts of Kelly and Enric if they didn't update their website almost hourly (a slight exaggeration) Worse, far from dispensing life-saving advice to this daring duo we've been reduced to the humble role of referring info-seeking members to their webpage for the latest news.

Well so much for our bruised feelings. The fact is www.kellyenric.com is about as good as it gets when it comes to webpages. It's a jolly little site, nicely put together and chock full of useful information, starting with a very complete packing list, and going on to a projected itinerary complete with map and expected dates of arrival. There is even a shot of their mascot, Troya the elephant strapped to the front of a motorcycle like a figurehead on a mighty clipper ship. More? Well there is a Spanish version, lots of photos each captioned in detail. Feel like corresponding with Kelly or Enric? You can do that too at least up until May 31st when the trip ends.

The Funky Fish Ecuador Guide

www.qni.com/~mj/index.html

Are we miffed that this site, which reports to be "dedicated to augmenting the tourist trade of Ecuador," makes absolutely no mention of South American Explorers or it's equally illustrious magazine? Certainly not. However, such a glaring omission makes one ponder. We expect improvement in the future but, for now, the site does provide useful information on Spanish schools, tour companies, it's own publication and business opportunities.

Birds in Suriname

www1.nhl.nl/~ribot/english/introd.htm

Sure you know the birds in your own backyard, maybe your state, or conceivably your whole country, but do you know the birds of Suriname? Well, it's not too late. Go to this site and you'll see 8 pages of birds in living color. More? You bet there's info on the 20 most common species and the most endangered birds. Even better you can listen to the sounds of these rare fowl and dawdle over detailed check lists and distribution maps as you learn the local name of each feathered friend.

AllHerb.com

It was a brilliant idea to hire a shaman(tribal healer and herbalist) from the Amazonian rainforest of Peru to answer questions about medicinal remedies. That's what attracted our attention to this site in the first place and disposed us to bring it to your attention. Clearly we waited too long. When we recently clicked on this site for the latest news in the world of herbs what did we find? All Herb has gone to herbal heaven. It's true if you don't believe us click on AllHerb.com. An attractive young woman pops up with the message "Our site is closed. Thank you for being our friends. We are proud..." Amazing. Here we thought herbs were booming. Maybe they were pedaling the wrong leaf. Need herbs bad? You can still talk to someone at All Herb by dialing 1-877- ALLHERB

Amazon Road

www.amazonroad.com

"Free accommodation as you travel the road." Sort of grabs your attention doesn't it? Well as you read on, it's not quite the deal you dream of. Essentially it boils down to this – if you're an established, talented writer taking a journey that's pretty certain to attract national or even better international media coverage, well then, this outfit will consider you for full sponsorship and shell out for your hotel. Not the deal of the century

when you come to think about it. As a matter of fact I think we could cough up for a flophouse here and there if your attracting all that media coverage.

Not feeling all that established or talented? It's ok. If you post updates about where you are, where you're heading and what adventures you're having, you may still qualify for free accommodation if there is any available where you are.

Banana Travel

www.Bananatravel.com

Write a story, get a trip.

That's what they say anyway. Actually it's a raffle. Here's how it works: submit an article and you get 100 points, submit a travel hint—25 points, send a postcard—5 points. For each point you get your name is entered in the contest. Eventually they draw a name and voilá you lose. That's right you've written a whole article for nothing. Of course you might win, but be serious, have you ever won a raffle? I mean ever? No. Nobody has and you won't either. Just forget about it.

Global Freeloaders

www.globalfreeloader.com

Freeloaders are a bad lot and global freeloaders, we suspect, are the same ilk. Here's the idea dreamed up by a 21-year old Australian: you put up some global freeloaders and later, you in turn get to sponge off them. What a deal! Sounds good huh? Especially if you can pick the lock on the fridge or make off with the silverware. The possibilities are limitless. Of course some of the time you've got to host a lot of riff raff. And with an accomplished freeloader it's a major problem getting them to get out. Still it's free to register and if you actually do play host and escape getting stabbed in your bed, you'll have stories to tell forever.

Passport Problems Solved

http://www.travel.state.gov/

Need a false passport to stiff creditors and evade child support? That's another site we can talk about later. This site is for solid citizens and volunteers of faith-based organizations. You never know when you'll need passport information and here, as you might suspect, is the source. Download application forms, check out visa requirements, order your birth certificate etc. If it has to do with passports, it's all here.

Virtual Tourist

www.virtualtourist.com

If you're a member of South American Explorers you already belong to a community. But let's suppose that's not enough. Let's say you want to belong to another community, that you're a community junkie. Well here's your chance. We joined Virtual Tourist ourselves. For the record we're number 127721. So what do we get for joining? All sorts of good information, the chance to virtually meet travelers, have virtual friends and feel virtually virtuous. Lots of good information on currencies, time zones, travel warnings, travel insurance and more. You also get to post your own tips and rate trips, hotels etc. Check it out.

Sustainable Development and the Americas Index

http://www.txinfinet.com/mader/ecotravel/sustain.html

All things considered, we've found sustainable development preferable to unsustainable development. Ron Mader must think the same, for he has compiled the following annotated index of relevant websites showcasing institutional work and other useful resources in the field of Sustainable Development.

Freighter

www.smallshipcruises.com/freighters.html

The days of hopping a freighter and chipping rust as you travel for free are over. It's true you can still catch a freighter but it's going to cost you. How much? Take the cheapest—the Katrin S in Miami and steam off to the Dominican Republic, Aruba, Curaçao, Venezuela and back for $1238 provided you'll willing to share a double room. Add $220 for taxes, fees and deviation insurance. Not cheap but check out the other listing for South/Central America.

QIXO (Quest for Impossibly eXcellent Offers)

www.qixo.com

There is nothing worse than booking a ticket somewhere only to find out somebody else got the same deal for half price. It leads to "fare rage" and has resulted in more than one brutal yet deserved murder. To avoid "fare rage," click QIXO, and compare airfares from the thirteen top travel websites including Travelocity, Expedia, CheapTickets, OneTravel, Travelscape, United, America West and Southwest. It's a great idea but it didn't work to well for us. The cheapest fare we could see for New York/Lima/Lima New York was $818. We've found cheaper.

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The New PLAZA FRANCIA INN Pension, Lima. Tel:(511)330.6080, address Rufino Torrico 1117. Very Clean dorm rooms with shared hot showers at US$7/night. Lonely Planet 2000 edition page 136. Also single, matrimonial, and double available. 10% off for advance reservations. Airport pick-up arranged on request so to be met personally at the airport by our driver with a sign. Email: franciasquareinn@yahoo.com Web page: www.incacountry.com (LC)

EXPLORERS INN, Tambopata Nature Reserve, Puerto Maldonado, Peru. Over 595 species of birds, 1200+ butterflies, 149 dragonflies. For Information and reservations, contact Peruvian Safaris, Alcanfores 459, Miraflorēs, Lima. Tel:(511)447.8888 Fax (511) 241.8427 (LC)

CLOSE TO SAE LIMA, family run Hostel Iquique. Friendly staff, comfortable rooms, use of kitchen facilities. Airport pick-ups available from $10. Special rates for groups and SAE members. Single room, $7.50, $11 with bath. Double room $9.50, $15 with bath. Shared rooms, $3. Jr. Iquique 758, Lima 5, Peru. Telefax: (511)433.4724, Tel: (511) 423.3699.http://barrioperu.com.pe/hiquique, Email hiqique@terra.com.pe (LC

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JOHNNY'S LODGING HOUSE-Caamano 145 y Colon, Quito, Ecuador. Rooms with hot showers, communal kitchen, washer and dryer, TV and sun terrace. Quiet neighborhood near buses and supermarket. Single $5.00, double $6.00. Tel:521-974 (64)

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Ads for Issue 65 must be prepaid and received by September 1, 2001.

CULTURA RESERVATION CENTRE, Quito: A group of independent hotel owners with a variety of beautiful places around Ecuador in one central office. Tel/Fax: 5932 558889. Email: info@ecuadortravel.com (QC)

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CHURUP GUEST HOUSE, Huaraz, Peru. Friendly, family run hostel. Laundry, storage, kitchen facilities. English spoken, climbing and trekking info, bus station pick-ups. Rooms from $4-$6. Tel: (51.44)722.584 Address: Jr. Pedro Campos #735 (LC)

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CASA ELENA, Cusco. SAE Recommended, one block from SAE Cusco, close to market. Family Style, Free breakfast, hot water, kitchen, cable TV. $10/night. Reservations preferred. Tel/Fax: 51.84.231.363 Email: Chemin@terra.com.pe (LC)

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POSADA DEL PARQUE. Charming house in safe area. Highly recommended as excellent value. Parque Hernan Velarde No. 60, Santa Beatriz, Lima 1. Fax (511)332.6927 email: monden@terra.com.pe 10% discount SAE. (LC)

MARFIL GUEST HOUSE, Lima. Cozy family run hostel located near the SAE. Kitchen and laundry facilities, cable TV, travel information. Spanish lessons available. Parque Ayacucho 126 (between the 3rd and 4th blocks of Bolivar), Pueblo Libre. Tel: (511) 463.3161 Email: yma25@yahoo.com (LC)

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DO YOU WANT TO SPEAK SPANISH? Take private lessons in Lima-Peru, lots of experience and recommended in Lonely Planet and Footprint Guidebooks. Contact: Patty Felix Telephone: 521-2559 / 921-1614 E-mail: patty_fel24@yahoo.com (LC)

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Forgotten VILCABAMBA. Vince Lee's new 515 page book is about the turbulent history and difficult exploration of Manco Inca's lost redoubt. Signed copies include 48 color photos + 60 pages of maps and drawings and are available for $35 (P&H inc) from the author at: sixpacmanco@compuserve.com or Box 174, Cortez, CO 81321 (68)

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ETCETERA

THE SAE is hosting a Miles Drive to accumulate flight credits for club managers in South America. Donations of miles will allow our hardworking volunteers to see their families and drink tap water (and good beer) each year. Please email saelima@terra.com.pe if you have miles on Delta, Continental, or American Airlines. Each donation is appreciated and donors will be mentioned in the Lima Club News!

IN WELCOMING THE NEW YEAR and beyond, we are offering a free airport transfer to any member who would be willing and able to bring a handcarry for the club from the United States to Peru or Ecuador.

WE NEED NEWS! Just about to toss out that New York Times as you get off your plane in Quito, Lima or Cusco? What about that old Newsweek you've already read? Don't throw it away! Our Clubhouses in South America need news from abroad! (CL)

DESPERATELY SEEKING COPIER and WASHING MACHINE. Got a Xerox photocopier kicking around? trading in your old washer for a new one? Care to make a donation to help us out? Please contact the Lima office at saelima@terra.com.pe (CL)

Cusco volunteers are working like crazy to develop the latest SAE clubhouse, check out our web page for updated information. All donations (cash, stash, pennies or pounds, stationery, sweeties, swag and stuff) very much appreciated! Just ask us what we need, and help develop YOUR clubhouse!

And, please, we need Handcarries from the U.S., to our clubhouses in Peru and Ecuador! Handcarries allow us to keep books and maps in stock at the clubhouses. If you think you can help, please contact our Ithaca office at explorer@samexplo.org. Warm thanks!

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Born in Blood and Fire

John Charles Chasteen

W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2001

352 pages, hardback, $26.95

Before you go to South America, read this book for the historical perspective on what you will find when you arrive. In its concise, yet panoramic view of Latin American history, *Born in Blood and Fire* examines 20 countries over six centuries, focusing on periods of colonialism, independence, political and economic reform, nationalism, dictatorship and liberalism.

The author, a professor of history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, begins with the first Spanish and Portuguese encounters with the indigenous peoples of Central and South America. He argues that these initial meetings created patterns of social domination that continue to exert a strong influence on the region. Next he discusses the African slave trade (Cuba, he says, received more slaves than the entire U.S.) and the resulting creation of multi-ethnic societies.

The fall of the Aztec and Inca empires marked the birth of Spanish America. *Born in Blood and Fire* examines the three centuries of colonial rule that followed. The author details the economics of gold, silver and sugar that dominated the region and traces the complex interplay between Christianity, the religions of the African slaves and those of the indigenous groups. He also touches on the sporadic revolts and rebellions that challenged colonial rule and ultimately led to a period of revolution.

According to the author, however, the revolutionary fervor stemmed not from the notions of liberty and equality, but rather from the native-born whites who were more interested in assuming the power of the colonial occupiers than in changing the economic and social order. After the revolutionaries rallied the masses to oust the Spanish, independence did almost nothing to alter the fundamental inequalities in Latin American society.

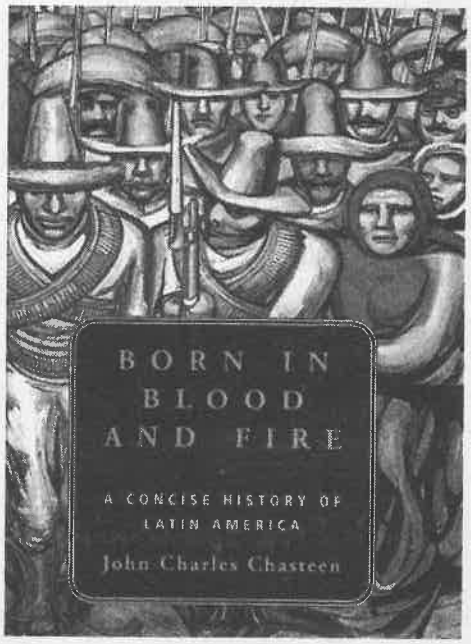
Instead, the industrial revolution of the late 19th century became the main spur toward political progress, according to the author. European and U.S. industrialists viewed Latin America as a vast market for manufactured goods and a source for raw materials and agricultural products. Following a deluge of international capital investment, the educated elite in Latin America raced to refashion themselves in the image of the liberal economic superpowers: the U.S., England and France. But, as the author argues, progressive reform and free market capitalism led to the neocolonial abuses of the large multinational corporations, such as those dominating the fruit business.

By 1960, the population of Latin America had reached over 200 million, but accounted for only two percent of U.S. international aid. The Cuban revolution changed all that. Suddenly, as a new cold war battleground against communism, Latin America enjoyed alliances between U.S. military and Latin American armed forces that encouraged the formation of military governments, such as the juntas in Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay, and other dictatorships, such as that of General Augusto Pinochet in Chile.

With the end of the cold war, by 1990, nationalism had become the wave of the past, to be replaced by liberalism which filled the ideological vacuum following the decline in Marxism and the military dictatorships formed in reaction. Neoliberalism, as the author calls it, emphasizes free trade and export production. Yet despite the current influx of capital and technology, poverty remains rife, race relations remain strained and the environment remains under siege.

As the author points out, history repeats itself, but never exactly.

–Martin Himmelfarb



Inca Empire: Scenic Calendar for 2001

Wright Water Engineers

An award-winning monthly calendar with vibrant color photographs of Pisac, terraces, ceremonial fountains, the gate of Machu Picchu, megalithic stone walls and more. A perfect gift for deserving friends and loved ones.
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Peru Video

Lonely Planet

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Wheels Across the Andes: The Armand Denis Expedition

SAEC Historical Video Two

A classic documentary account of 1940's South American exploration. Partly sponsored by the Chrysler Corporation. to show the durability of their trucks, the Armand Denis exepdition fords rivers and climbs mountains throughout Ecuador and Peru. Their final destinaton: Bolivia, where they film local festivals and conduct high-altitude research in human physiology. 30 minutes. List price
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Peru Information Packet

Here crammed onto twenty or so pages is everything the Club thinks you ought to know about, travel safety, exchange rates, what to do to avoid robbery, popular hikes and climbs, places to visit, etc.
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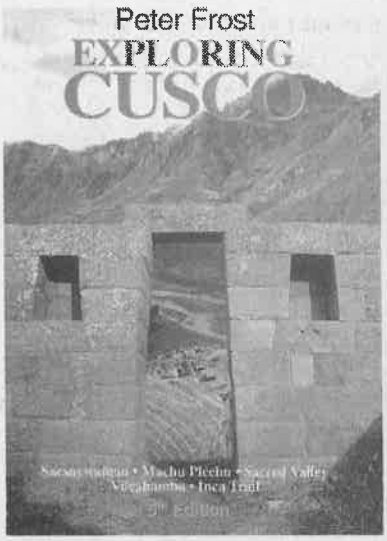
Cusco & Machu Picchu Information Packet

Thank you, members, thank you for all the unstinting praise you've lavished on the Club's one-and-only Cusco & Machu Picchu Information Packet. Just as you say, it's all here: history, when to go, how to get there, safety, altitude sickness, communication, markets, lodging, cafés, villages in the Sacred Valley, renting cars, getting to Machu Picchu, hiking, tour companies, recommended reading. And that's just for starters.
$20.00 (non-members get $10 credit if they join) [Members $4.50] Item #59

Peru Handbook

Alan Murphy (Footprint Handbooks)

This 1999 edition comes in a new, easy-to-access format. Rates hotels (in every price range), excursions, tour companies, restaurants, language schools, nightclubs, medical services, places to shop. Includes safety warnings, historical sidebars, great maps—an excellent guide written by those who know the country. Highly recommended.
$17.95 [Members $16.95] Item #126



Exploring Cusco

Peter Frost

This is the best little guide to the Imperial Capital with an abundance of information on the Inca Trail, Vilcabamba, local markets, archaeological sites, restaurants, and everything else you might want to see. A Club favorite for many years. Latest edition.
$14.00 [Members $12.00] Item #54

Machu Picchu Historical Sanctuary

Peter Frost

A memorable collection of photographs and detailed maps of Machu Picchu, the Inca Trail, and the Cusco region. Frost has brought together a wealth of historical material, essays and observations. A Blue Ribbon list of contributors includes Martin Chambi, Heinz Plenge, and Johan Reinhard. Unique chapters on the ornithology and orchids of Machu Picchu. A beautiful book, gracefully written. A companion piece to Frost's widely acclaimed Exploring Cusco. Paperback, 64 pages. $
20.00 [Members $18.00] Item #380

Peru: A Travel Survival Kit 2000

Rob Rachowiecki (Lonely Planet)

Here is all you need to know to walk the Inca Trail, scale the high Andes, boat the azure waters of Lake Titicaca, appreciate the exquisite detail of colonial architecture, or navigate the headwaters of the Amazon. Recommended.
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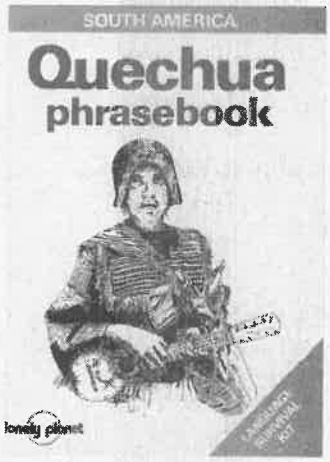
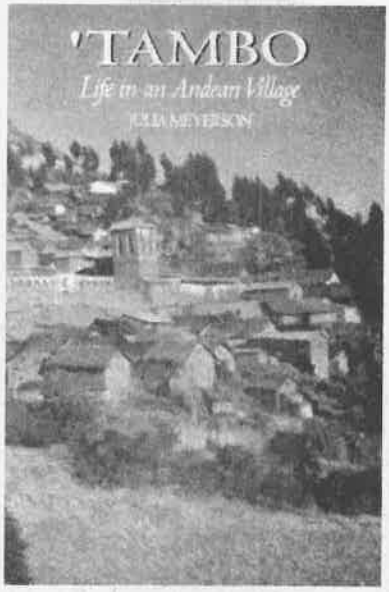


Quechua Phrasebook

Ronald Wright (Lonely Planet)

Covers the dialect spoken in Cusco, Peru. Many useful phrases. Approximately 96 pages.
$4.95 [Members $3.95] Item #365



Tambo: Life in an Andean Village

Julia Meyerson

Ms. Meyerson's account of her year with a Quecchua family is an insider's view narrated with skill, assurance, and genuine warmth that reveals the traditional world of Andean women and examines one woman's process of acculturation. See our book review in Issue #27 of the South American Explorer.
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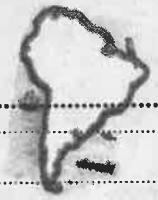
Hiking and climbing in Ecuador and Peru? Not sure what topos you'll need? Take a look at our web site at www.samexplo.org, call us at 607-277-0488, or e-mail us at explorer@samexplo.org. To order, see page 63.

Look closely at the maps on this page. Then try to get one from Amazon.com. You can't! Why? Because members of South American Explorers handcarry these maps back from various secret (O.K., forget the secret) locations in South America, so we're one of the very few and sometimes the only source for these maps in the U.S. You want a map of Yanahuanca that could well mean the difference between life and death when you're hoofing about the Cordillera Huayhuash? Well, you better talk to us, not Amazon.com, not BarnesandNoble. com. Us, South American Explorers, your friendly U.S. map distributor. Get it?



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Chiquian **SALE**	5.00	5.00	#655
Chivay (32s)	12.00	10.00	#664
Cordilleras Blanca & Huayhuash Tourist map	12.00	10.00	#625
Corongo (18h)	12.00	10.00	#656
Huambo (32r) **SALE**	5.00	5.00	#665
Huaraz (20h) **SALE**	5.00	5.00	#662
Huari (19i)	12.00	10.00	#657
Machu Picchu **SALE**	5.00	5.00	#700
Huayhuash Trekking (1:80:000)	8.00	6.00	#626
Inca Trail (1:25,000)	8.00	6.00	#627
Llanganuco/Santa Cruz Trail (1:80,000)	8.00	6.00	#626
Ocongate (28t)	12.00	10.00	#658
Orcapampa (31r) **SALE**	5.00	5.00	#666
Pomabanba (18i) **SALE**	5.00	5.00	#663
Quillabamba (26o) **SALE**	5.00	5.00	#669
Recuay (20i) **SALE**	5.00	5.00	#659
Urubamba (27r)	12.00	10.00	#667
Vilcanota (Auzangate) Trail (1:50:000)	8.00	6.00	#629
Yanahuanca **SALE**	5.00	5.00	#660
VENEZUELA (1:1,750,000)	8.95	7.95	#710
Nicaragua (1:750,000)	7.95	6.95	#789
West Indies SALE	5.00	5.00	#788
Guyana **SALE**	5.00	5.00	#410
The Guianas (Guyana, Surinam, French Guiana) **SALE**	5.00	5.00	#563
SURINAM (1:750,000) **SALE**	6.00	6.00	#411

Join the South American Explorers and receive all the benefits of Club membership, including four issues of the *South American Explorer*, use of the clubhouses, and discounts on books and maps!

South American Explorers Membership Categories

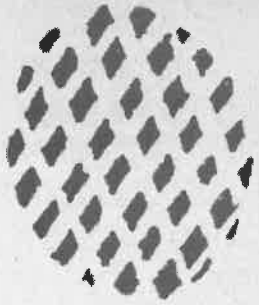
Regular ($50 individual, $75 couple): Benefits include a subscription to the *South American Explorer* (the quarterly journal of the Club), discounts on items in the catalog, a laminated rabid-bat-spittle-proof membership card, use of our information and trip planning services, storage for equipment and supplies at the Lima, Cusco, and Quito Clubhouses, and much more. A complete list of membership services is available upon request.

Contributing ($80 individual, $125 couple): Contributing Members, as the name indicates, contribute immeasurably to the general cheer and goodwill of their Club. For their generosity they receive a much coveted club t-shirt.

Supporting ($150): As the name implies, these Members are virtual pillars, generously supporting their Club in its heroic efforts. And, because we know that Supporting Members always welcome a thoughtful token of our appreciation, we offer these discerning individuals a book from our catalog. Finally, a Supporting Member may also bestow *two* free gift subscriptions to the *South American Explorer* at any time during the period of his/her membership.

Life ($750): Our worthy Life Members receive all the benefits of Club Membership during their mortal tour of this planet. Esteemed Life Members are encouraged to choose any one of the large selection of books from our catalog. As a final gesture of gratitude, Life Members will be sent copies of the last 15 issues of the *South American Explorer* that are in print and *ten* free gift subscriptions that may be conferred at any time.

Afterlife ($7500): As an Afterlife Member you will, of course, receive all the benefits bestowed upon Regular, Contributing, Supporting, and Life Members. In addition, when you pass into the realm beyond, you will face eternity with serenity, assured of your Club's perpetual gratitude. You will know the true meaning of immortality as you return each year to preside at the annual Club bacchanal held in your honor. Imagine the envy of your fellow spirits when they witness this outpouring of affection and devotion to your revered memory, a blessed dividend of immortality that might have been theirs had they but followed your sublime example and shown but a mote of your greatness of heart during their brief and pointless jigs upon the stage of life.



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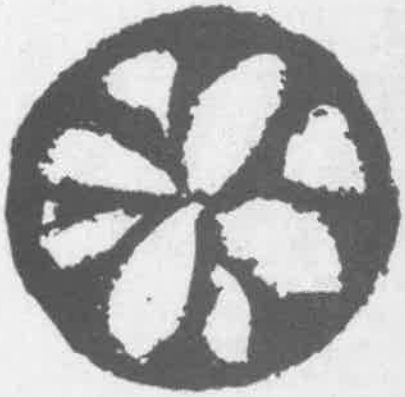

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